

Israel issues demolition orders for 24 Arab homes

BET OMAR (AFP) — Israel issued demolition orders Monday for 24 Arab homes built without permits in this West Bank village and told owners to evacuate the property within eight days, Palestinians said. "The Israeli army warned us we had eight days to evacuate and destroy our homes, otherwise it would do so," one of the owners told AFP on condition he not be identified. He said about 20 of the homes targeted for destruction were occupied. According to villagers, the houses were ordered torn down so that the army could build a by-pass road for settlers living in the nearby Gush Etzion bloc of Jewish settlements.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية والراي

Saudis pledge \$2.4m for Palestinian refugee aid

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has decided to donate \$2.4 million to the United Nations Palestinian refugee relief agency, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported Sunday. It said the decision was announced in Amman at a recent meeting of donors and governments hosting Palestinian refugees. "The donation is aimed at easing the burdens facing the relief agency to enable it to continue to provide basic and humanitarian services to refugees," SPA quoted the Saudi ambassador to Jordan, Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz Sudairi, who announced the donation, as saying. Mr. Sudairi said that since 1980, the kingdom had contributed \$1.2 million a year to the agency's budget and had made other contributions totalling \$54 million since 1975.

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Majali to visit Egypt next month

AMMAN (AFP) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali will pay a working visit of several days to Cairo beginning July 5, an official from the Prime Minister's office said. He will co-chair with Egyptian prime minister Kamal Ganzouri the annual meeting of the Joint Egyptian-Jordanian committee, the official said. Dr. Majali, who became head of the Jordanian government in March, will also pay a two-day working visit to the United Arab Emirates June 21 and then head to Tunisia June 25, the official said.

Prince Abdullah calls on Arab Army

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the Regent, on Monday called at the army headquarters. The Regent discussed with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai Kaabneh issues of concern to the armed forces. Prince Abdullah was received by Field Marshal Kaabneh and senior armed forces officers.

Hizbollah kills Israeli soldier in Lebanon

TEL AVIV (R) — Islamic guerrillas killed an Israeli soldier and wounded three others in a roadside blast in south Lebanon, the army said on Monday. A tank on operational activity near Beit Yaboun in the eastern sector of Israel's south Lebanon occupation zone set off the roadside charge late Sunday, an army spokesman said. Army censors delayed publication of the report until Monday. "The Hizbollah organisation claimed responsibility for the incident," he said. One soldier was seriously hurt in the blast, dying in hospital later of his wounds. Three others suffered light to moderate injuries. "The charge went off. The soldier and I were wounded. We were stuck in the tank and the evacuation took about two hours," one of the wounded soldiers told reporters from his hospital bed. Meanwhile, a Lebanese civilian was wounded on Monday in an explosion in the Israeli-occupied border zone in south Lebanon, the radio station of Israel's allied South Lebanon Army said. Jerje Atiyeh, 42, was wounded by the blast while driving a pickup on a main road on the outskirts of the town of Jezzine in the border enclave, the radio reported. It accused guerrillas of the "Iranian-Syrian enemy" of carrying out the bombing. On Saturday, the Israeli army said guerrillas wounded one soldier in south Lebanon.

Rocket attack on Istanbul police HQ

ISTANBUL (AFP) — A rocket attack on police headquarters in the centre of Istanbul caused material damage but no injuries Monday, police said. The rocket hit offices used by the drugs squad in the building, the police said. Two people were seen running off after the attack, they added. A hand-held rocket launcher was found during a search of the immediate area. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

U.S. to announce \$100 m. in additional aid to Jordan

'It is coincidental that \$100 million (allocated by Congress to move embassy to Jerusalem) is almost equivalent to the sum total of the aid package promised to Jordan, which of course will not go down well at home' — Crown Prince Hassan

Special from Washington

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS Crown Prince Hassan met yesterday with U.S. Vice-President Al Gore on the first day of a working visit during which President Bill Clinton will announce an additional aid package to Jordan worth \$100 million.

The package, details of which will be discussed over the next several days, will be unveiled at a meeting the Crown Prince will have with President Clinton today.

Prince Hassan's talks with the president will also cover the Middle East peace process and the situation in the region in general. U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Secretary of Commerce William Daley, Acting Secretary of Defence John White will be among senior administration officials whom the Crown Prince will meet during his four-day stay in Washington.

No official statement was issued after the private lunch that Mr. and Mrs. Gore gave in honour of the Crown Prince and Princess Sarvath yesterday, but an aide to the Crown Prince said that "the vice-president assured His Royal Highness that the \$100 million additional aid package

was American money — an American concern." The aide added that during his meeting with Mr. Clinton tomorrow, the president will discuss with the Crown Prince a speedy dispersal of the package.

It was also understood that their talks covered such important issues as the American role in attempts to revive the stalled negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, the House of Representatives' vote last week to move the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, Iraq, regional cooperation as well as bilateral relations.

Prince Hassan spoke about explaining Jordan's position on these issues just before his official talks started on Monday morning.

Delivering an address at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP), the Crown Prince said that he was "reluctant to advise whether American mediation should be upgraded or not." That is a strictly American concern, he said. "But what is clear to me is that the mediator's role, whatever his rank, is going to be limited if the principals continue to shun each other because of political pressure to which they claim they are being sub-

jected. In short, the mediator has to restore a measure of trust between the parties, and create a great deal of goodwill to make meaningful talks possible again."

On Jerusalem and Jabal Abu Ghneim, the Crown Prince said, it would be helpful to draw a distinction between the requirement of housing and the pursuit of settlement building and expansion in the occupied territories. He characterised the House of Representatives' decision on the Holy City as "not helpful at this time." The resolution, calling on the administration to reaffirm that Jerusalem must remain Israel's undivided capital and allocate funds for the relocation of the embassy "is regrettable," he said. "It is a measure which is not entirely in tune with the effort of peace-making."

"It is coincidental that \$100 million (which the Congress allocated to moving the embassy) is almost equivalent to the sum total of the aid package promised to Jordan, which of course will not go down well at home, as you can imagine," the Crown Prince told his audience at the institute, which included Washington-based ambassadors. Middle East experts and U.S. officials.

"We are deeply conscious of the positive bipartisan role in recognising Jordan's contribution (to the cause of peace) and what it will take to continue to play it."

On Iraq, Prince Hassan said, there has been "absolutely no change in Jordanian policy in invoking U.N. resolutions." However, while we are irrevocably committed to the territorial integrity of Iraq as a sovereign independent state within its present borders, we believe that a change of government in that country is the exclusive prerogative of the Iraqi people and no one else, especially if what is required is democratic rule.

As far as regional cooperation is concerned, the Crown Prince called on setting up a regional body to draw up a strategy for the use and conservation of water. He warned that there will be fears and feelings of insecurity for as long as a regional vision remained absent. Also, in the absence of a Marshall plan for the Middle East, each country will try to push the "envelope of opportunity," he said.

The Crown Prince talked about the internal situation in the Kingdom. "Jordan is

(Continued on page 7)



A Palestinian boy is arrested during clashes between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian youths during a third day of clashes in Hebron, Monday. The Palestinian protests have flared up again after a few months of calm, due to the stalemate in Middle East peace negotiations (AFP photo)

Palestinians hurl stones at Israeli soldiers in Hebron

Combined agency dispatches

JEWISH SETTLERS shot and wounded a Palestinian youth in Gaza on Monday during a clash over land which Arabs said had recently been seized by settlers, witnesses said.

They said an Israeli from the Gush Katif settlement block fired at least three shots at three Palestinian journalists who arrived to cover a demonstration by

Arab landowners.

"I shouted to the settler in Hebrew that we were reporters, but he cursed at us and continued to fire his pistol. One bullet barely missed us," a Reuters reporter said, describing the gunman as a middle-aged settler with a grey beard.

A settler spokesman said he knew of no such incident. Israeli soldiers later arrived at the scene, punched a cameraman and

kicked others, journalists said. One youth was shot in the knee and was taken to hospital. Angered by U.S. Congress' recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Palestinians threw stones and firebombs at Israeli troops in Hebron for a third day Monday and staged a protest outside the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem. Also on Monday

(Continued on page 7)

Arab experts to debate cheaper Mideast water

DUBAI (R) — International experts meet in Oman Tuesday to look into an ambitious project to cut the cost of desalinated water in the Middle East and North Africa and ease the region's growing water shortage.

A group of 20 experts who make up the Research Advisory Council (RAC) formed in May by the Middle East Desalination Research Centre (MEDRC), one of many projects spawned by the Middle East peace process, will begin two days of talks.

It will be the first meeting of the experts from Jordan, Oman, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Italy, Kuwait, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), the United States, Israel, France, Japan, South Korea and Germany.

Water, one of the region's most precious resources, is

not only scarce but a bitter point of contention between Israelis and Palestinians as well as between other regional states.

Israel draws most of its water from the springs and rivers of the occupied territories and Palestinians argue this leaves them only one tenth of their real rights.

Eric Jankel, director of the Muscat-based MEDRC which was established in December 1996, said the experts "will make recommendations regarding funding levels, priorities for research areas and will develop recommended proposals for specific research topics."

He said the centre planned to issue tenders for research proposals to institutions and universities in September and October and award contracts for research in December.

which would be an important step towards finding solutions to the water problem.

Water desalination is vital for the largely arid countries of the Middle East, but its costs are prohibitive for most. Many governments bear most of the cost of desalination, which experts say accounts for just 5.75 per cent of regional water resources.

Middle East countries largely depend on scarce rainfall and non-renewable underground water, they say.

"The average cost of desalinating sea water to make it drinkable in the region is between \$1 and \$1.50 per cubic metre, but in many countries it is highly subsidised and the government absorbs lots of the cost," Mr. Jankel told

(Continued on page 7)

Palestinian legislators debate new tough property law for foreigners

RAMALLAH (AFP) — The Palestinian legislature began debate Monday on a radical law which would declare all sales of land in "Palestine" to Israelis as "national treason."

The "property law for foreigners" threatens "maximum punishment" for Palestinians who sell land to Israelis and would also bar property sales to non-Israeli foreigners unless the deals received prior approval from the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) council of ministers.

The elected 88-member Legislative Council

launched its debate amid a crisis in the peace process caused by Israel's policy of expanding Jewish settlements in occupied Palestinian areas.

The debate also coincides with a controversial crackdown by Palestinian security forces against Arabs who sell land to settlers.

In a bid to avoid violating interim peace agreements with Israel which prohibit the Palestinians from adopting any laws which would harm "Israeli interests," the bill makes no

(Continued on page 7)

Wife of suspected land dealer says he did not kill himself

NABLUS (AP) — The wife of a suspected Palestinian land dealer denied Monday that he committed suicide and said her husband was beaten in Palestinian custody.

The victim, Hakam Kamhawi, 57, died Sunday at a hospital in the West Bank town of Ramallah. A Palestinian security official has said Mr. Kamhawi apparently killed himself.

However, Mr. Kamhawi's

wife, Ansa, said her husband had no reason to take his own life. "He would never have committed suicide," Mrs. Kamhawi told the Associated Press.

"I saw his body. It showed signs of torture," she said, adding that his body was covered with bruises, apparently from beatings.

Not counting Mr.

(Continued on page 7)

UNRWA files complaint over alleged corruption

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The U.N. agency charged with helping Palestinian refugees has filed a complaint with Israeli police over the alleged embezzlement of \$350,000 by a Palestinian clerk, officials said Monday.

Israeli police and officials at the U.N. Relief Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) said the complaint targeted the former chief clerk for health affairs at the agency's east Jerusalem office, Hussein Abdul Khader.

He is suspected of submitting false invoices for medical services allegedly delivered to refugees in the West Bank and east Jerusalem to the tune of \$350,000, a police spokeswoman said.

UNRWA official Lynn Failing confirmed that the agency has asked police to investigate the affair, saying that since Mr. Khader

worked at an office in east Jerusalem, the complaint was filed with the Israeli authorities even though the suspect is a West Bank resident.

"We carried out an internal audit at the beginning of the year and sent our results to U.N. headquarters in New York before filing the complaint," he told AFP.

"I trust that our prompt and decisive action proves that we will not tolerate that money meant for refugees is embezzled," he said.

The UNRWA has a \$312 million budget this year, plus \$40 million in food and medicine donations. Most funds are provided by the European Union, the United States, Japan and Sweden.

The agency provides assistance for 3.4 million Palestinian refugees living in the occupied territories, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

U.N. mission to Israel rejects list of conditions

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — A U.N. mission to verify Israeli compliance with a U.N. resolution calling for a halt in Jewish settlement building is in doubt after Israeli posed "unacceptable" conditions, U.N. sources said Monday.

U.N. Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs Sir Kieran Prendergast had been tasked by U.N. chief Kofi Annan with the investigation, and had hoped to leave last Saturday.

But a U.N. source said that "the list of conditions from the Israelis is unacceptable."

The United Nations and Israeli authorities have had an exchange of letters on the issue, and each time Israel has sought further clarifications or posed conditions.

No details were immediately available on the latest Israeli letter, received by the United Nations on Friday.

A General Assembly resolution adopted on April 25 during a special emergency session notably called for a halt in the construction of a controversial Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

Israel's decision on March 18 to go ahead with the construction of the site at Jabal Abu Ghneim despite international protests sent the peace process with the Palestinians into the deep freeze.

In a letter to Mr. Annan on Friday, Palestine's observer to the United Nations, Nasser Al Kidwa, reminded the U.N. Secretary-General that the resolution also asked him to report back on Israeli compliance "within two months."

The Palestinians are threatening to reconvene an emergency session after June 25 if Mr. Annan fails to send an envoy to investigate the situation.

More Palestinians back peace process, poll finds

NABLUS (AFP) — A growing majority of Palestinians support the peace process with Israel and think negotiations should be resumed despite the current crisis over Jewish settlement activity, according to an opinion poll released Monday.

The survey carried out early this month by the Independent Centre for Palestine Research and Studies found that 68 per cent of Palestinians questioned support the peace

process with Israel, up from 60 per cent in April.

The centre's director, Khalil Shikaki, said a "surprising majority" of 56.2 per cent also backed an immediate resumption of peace negotiations with Israel despite the crisis caused by a series of recent Israeli decisions.

Only 39 per cent of those queried supported the Palestinian National Authority's refusal to return to peace talks.

Yasser Arafat's autonomy

government has boycotted negotiations since Israel began work in mid-March on a settlement for 30,000 Jews in Arab east Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly rejected Palestinian demands, backed by the United States and Arab states, for a freeze on new settlement building pending negotiations on a permanent peace agreement.

The crisis has also been fuelled by Israel's policy of

revoking Arabs' east Jerusalem residency permits, land confiscations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Israel's failure to carry out significant new troop withdrawals from the West Bank.

The survey by the Nablus-based research centre was carried out from June 5 to 7 among 1,317 Palestinians over the age of 18 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The margin of error was given as three per cent.

Damascus Declaration states to meet

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Egypt, Syria and the six Gulf states, signatories to the Damascus Declaration cooperation agreement, will meet in Syria later this month, an Arab diplomat here said.

The countries' foreign ministers will meet to discuss the Middle East peace process, the Turkish incursion in northern Iraq and a controversial regional economic conference in the Qatari capital Doha in November.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Amr Musa said meeting will also discuss the creation of an

Arab common market.

The meeting will be held on June 25 and 26 in Latakia, northern Syria, three days earlier than initially announced.

Syria has won support from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for its position opposing the Doha conference, expected to include Israel, while the peace process is deadlocked, diplomats said.

Damascus says the conference would contradict an Arab League call in March for member states to halt nor-

malisation with Israel following the start of work in March on a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

The Damascus Declaration was signed by Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the UAE in March 1991 following the Gulf war which ended the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.

But the multiple levels of cooperation it provided for, including on security matters, never materialised despite a number of meetings by the signatories' foreign ministers.

However, there is active political cooperation between its members, especially Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

In Cairo, Mr. Musa told the Al Ahram newspaper Monday that the eight Damascus Declaration countries "will take the initiative" to create an Arab common market which will open to membership by other Arab countries.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said last week that such a market would be the only way of developing the economies of Arab nations.



A Palestinian boy is rushed to an ambulance after he was hit in the upper lip with a rubber bullet fired by Israeli soldiers during clashes in Hebron on Monday (Reuters photo)

Iraq delays oil exports to await humanitarian supplies — MEES

NICOSIA (AFP) — Iraq has decided to delay oil exports until the United Nations approves the second phase of humanitarian aid under the U.N. "oil-for-food" deal, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported Monday.

The Nicosia-based newsletter said that Iraq, which is allowed to export \$2 billion worth of crude every six months, was not expected to resume oil exports "before the end of June, or possibly even well into July."

The U.N. Security Council on June 4 renewed the oil-for-food deal for another six months but MEES said Iraq is awaiting approval for a new humani-

tarian supplies plan before resuming crude exports.

It said a U.N. delegation was expected in Baghdad shortly to review the plan with Iraqi authorities, while Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz is expected to raise the issue in New York when he visits soon for a conference at U.N. headquarters.

Under the oil-for-food agreement Iraq is allowed to sell \$2 billion worth of oil every six months to buy food and medicine, defray U.N. costs and pay reparations for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Iraq began exporting oil in December but has repeatedly protested at delays in the arrival of ship-

ments of food and medicine during the first six-month period, which ended June 8.

"The reason behind Baghdad's move is frustration with the excessive delays that the U.S. is creating in the way of approving the humanitarian supply contracts," MEES said.

"Only 40 per cent of the food supplies and one per cent of the medicine has arrived in Iraq so far," it added, suggesting that Baghdad would ask for a greater proportion of medical supplies because of the dire shortages.

Last week, Iraqi Health Minister Umid Medhat Mubarak protested that Iraq has received only \$2 million worth of medicine out

of the \$210 million allowed up until June.

The last Iraqi shipment of Kirkuk crude was in late May, according to MEES, and since then prices have slumped, with Kirkuk crude destined for Europe now selling at \$14.50 a barrel.

That would mean Iraq would need to export around 850,000 barrels per day (bpd) compared with around 650,000 bpd over the past three months, MEES said.

"According to MEES sources, if and when Iraqi oil exports are resumed and if they have to be squeezed in a shorter time frame, Iraq can for a while sustain an export capacity of around 1.3 million bpd," it said.

'70 dead in Kurd rebel clashes'

ANKARA (R) — Sixty-eight Kurdish guerrillas and two members of a pro-state militia group have been killed in clashes in southeastern Turkey in recent days, security officials said Monday.

Security forces killed 58 Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas in a four-day operation, military headquarters in Ankara said in a statement.

The statement said the rebel commanders in the provinces of Erzurum and Tunceli were among those killed. It did not give the exact time or place of the clashes.

Ten guerrillas and two members of a state-paid anti-rebel militia died in a separate clash in the province of Simak late Sunday night, security officials said.

The Turkish government pays and arms up to 70,000 villagers, mostly Kurds, to fight the PKK.

More than 24,000 people have been killed in the 12-year-old conflict between security forces and the rebels, fighting for independence or autonomy in the southeast.

Five-star prep school to enter Israeli military intelligence

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli parents have been paying more than \$7,000 to enrol their children in a six-month preparatory course for joining the army intelligence service — and have a better chance of avoiding combat, Israel Radio reported Monday.

The school at Givat Haviva north of Tel Aviv specialises in teaching Arabic and Muslim culture to candidates for the military intelligence service.

According to the radio,

parents pay 25,000 shekels (\$7,400) to enrol their children in the course prior to their mandatory military service.

Military intelligence is considered an elite segment of the army, and in the eyes of many parents has the advantage of sparing most of its members from combat duty.

A group of mothers of soldiers serving in the Israeli-occupied zone in south Lebanon recently began a series of public

demonstrations to call on the government to withdraw from the neighbouring country.

The Israeli press regularly reports on declining motivation among young Israelis to serve in the army, and especially in combat units.

Israeli 18-year olds are obliged to serve in the army, with men conscripted for three year-terms and women for 18 months. Arab Israelis and religious students are exempted.

Egypt human rights group claims prisoners remain detained despite acquittal

CAIRO (AP) — Thousands of political detainees stay locked up for years even after their acquittal, an Egyptian human rights group said Monday.

Presenting its 1996 report, the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights claimed that police systematically tortured suspects and criticised an Islamic body for ordering police to confiscate books, and the interrogation and imprisonment of journalists.

It said that over the past five years, the interior ministry has been transferring prisoners from detention centres to police stations or security offices despite

court orders releasing them.

There, the detainees are kept for a few days "until a new detention order is issued, stating, contrary to actual facts, that the detainee has 'resumed his terrorist activities after his release,'" the group said.

It said 12 people had "involuntarily disappeared" between 1992 and 1996. They included Mansour Kekheya, a Libyan dissident exiled in Egypt, and Talaat Fouad Qassem, a spokesman for the militant Gamaa Al Islamiyah, or Islamic Group, in Europe, who disappeared at the end of 1995.

There was no official comment

immediately available on the report, but President Hosni Mubarak's government has in the past dismissed as grossly exaggerated or untrue charges of human rights violations.

Under emergency laws in effect since the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat by militants, suspects can be held without charge.

However, the worst violation of human rights in Egypt remains the ill-treatment and torture of detainees, the report said. It said five people died under torture last year.

"Torture in police stations takes place directly after the

arrest of the victims, prior to being presented before the prosecutions office," the report said.

It said torture was conducted in order to force detainees into confession, to extract information or settle personal disputes or sometime for no reason at all.

"Torture sometimes takes place for no reason, a fact that reveals a serious psychological disorder on the part of some members of the police force," the rights group said.

Torture methods, it said, include hanging the victim like a slaughtered animal, passing electric current through parts of the body, beating with leather straps

or wooden rods and occasionally rape or threats of rape.

It also complained of a lack of medical care for prisoners, which led to the death of 15 inmates in 1996.

Meanwhile, the report said, violence between security forces and armed Islamist groups eased in 1996. The group said 174 people died last year, compared to 373 the previous year.

The report said freedom of opinion and expression suffered seriously in 1996, when 86 journalists, writers and intellectuals were interrogated and tried under the provisions of a 1995 law.

The report criticised the ban

and confiscation of foreign newspapers and a number of books on Shiite Islam.

It also criticised the role of the Islamic Research Academy at Al Azhar, Egypt's leading seat of Islamic learning.

It said the "artistic production police" on recommendation from the academy, confiscated several books, claiming they were "disrespectful" to Islam.

"EOHR believes that the supervisory role played by the Islamic Research Academy is a form of punishing intellectuals for holding opinions different to those of the academy," it said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

15:35 Soccer match — Chile vs Ecuador
17:00 Square One
17:10 The Album Show
18:10 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Coach
20:00 Doc. — Tilt
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Doc — Nature of Things
22:00 News in English
22:25 West Beach
23:00 Drug Wars

PRAYER TIMES

03:50 Fajr
05:25 (Sunrise) Doha
12:36 Dhuhur
16:17 Asr
19:48 Maghreb
21:33 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefieh. Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church
Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation

Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 5516245

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Tel. 637440.

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

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Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

The weather will be fair with

winds northwesterly moderate.

On Wednesday and Thursday,

another rise in temperature will

take place. In Aqaba, it will be

hot, winds northerly moderate

and seas calm.

Amman 18/31

Aqaba 24/39

Deserts 16/25

Jordan Valley 25/38

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 30, Aqaba 38 Humidity

readings: Amman 37 per cent,

Aqaba 23 per cent.

USEFUL

TELEPHONE

NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Bassam Karadshah 759200

Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi 894788

Dr. Salman Daboubi 776751

Dr. Khalid Abdo 657129

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080

Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Samir Al Lawzi 989601

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637711

Civil Defence Dept 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Resc

cue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 621111,

637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department

..... 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Com-

plaints 897467

Amman Municipality Com-

plaints 787111

Telephone Information (direc-

tory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs

661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority

..... 815615

Electric Power Company

636381

RJ Flight Information

0853200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-

53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre

813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 644281/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity

..... 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital

602340/50

Arnal Hospital 674155



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday confers with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Maliki to discuss economic and trade cooperation between Jordan and Iran (Petra photo)

Jordan, Iran to bolster trade, cultural exchange

AMMAN (Petra) — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Maliki said Monday that a joint Jordanian-Iranian committee will discuss economic and trade cooperation between the two countries in a meeting scheduled within the next two months.

Mr. Maliki said that he discussed the agenda of the coming meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali in the course of a general review of Jordanian-Iranian relations. The Iranian parliament has recently endorsed a Jordanian-Iranian trade protocol for organising trade

between the two countries. Mr. Maliki said that the protocol will be reviewed at the joint meeting.

Mr. Maliki also said that Iran is interested in studying Jordan's investment climate and looks forward to further bolstering economic relations with the Kingdom.

Mr. Maliki and Dr. Majali also reviewed cultural cooperation between the two countries. Mr. Maliki noted that the two countries also have signed agreements on a student exchange programme and the teaching of the Persian language at Jordanian

universities. Mr. Maliki said that he and the prime minister reached agreement on the exchange of cultural exhibitions that will be held in Tehran and Amman.

Also Monday, Mr. Maliki met Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi and discussed prospects of cooperation in religious affairs and visits by Iranians to the tombs of the Prophet Mohammad's companions in Jordan.

Dr. Abbadi outlined his ministry's task of caring for the Islamic holy places in Jerusalem.

Prosecutor rests case in Dakamseh trial

Psychiatrist undecided on defendant's mental condition

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A psychiatrist testifying for the prosecution in the trial of Corporal Ahmad Dakamseh, the Jordanian soldier charged with killing seven Israeli schoolgirls last March, Monday made contradicting statements during his testimony before the military tribunal. During the three-hour-long session, at the end of which the prosecution rested its case, psychiatrist Major Nabil Hmoud, who practices at King Hussein Medical Centre, told the court at the outset that Cpl. Dakamseh was mentally sane.

However, the witness, who stated that he conducted psychological tests two days after the March 13 shooting incident, later contradicted his statement by saying that Cpl. Dakamseh had symptoms of personal disorder and should be further examined by other psychiatrists.

"Based on his past medical

record, Cpl. Dakamseh's medical reports indicated that he has mental disorders and I recommend that he be examined," said Maj. Hmoud.

Maj. Hmoud, who has been a practising psychiatrist for the past nine years, said that the defendant told him following the shooting incident, that "he was worried and couldn't sleep for eight days because he was thinking of attacking Israeli buses."

On hearing psychiatrist's statement, Cpl. Dakamseh sprang to his feet and shouted: "He is a liar."

The witness maintained his testimony, saying: "Cpl. Dakamseh then informed me that he shot the girls because they made fun of him and were laughing and looking at him while he prayed."

Maj. Hmoud also stated that one of the mental tests indicated that Cpl. Dakamseh "had strong sexual reflections, and some temperment, and these are

genetic traits with which a person is born."

The witness, who was cross-examined by the defence, the prosecution and the court for one hour and 30 minutes, said he learned that the defendant attempted to take his own life once in 1989 by swallowing pills following a fight with his mother.

"After inquiring from doctors at the hospital where he was treated, I did not find any risks in what he did. Rather, swallowing the medicine was a reflection of anger which is a symptom of personal disorder," Maj. Hmoud said.

Brigadier General Farah Nimri, 46, also from King Hussein Medical Centre, who examined the defendant two weeks after the shooting incident, said: "Cpl. Dakamseh appeared normal and was in a good physical and psychological condition."

The two prosecution witnesses confirmed that Cpl. Dakamseh was not subject

ed to any psychological or physical torture, and "that the defendant signed willingly on a report that he was not subjected to any form of torture."

Earlier in the day when Cpl. Dakamseh entered the courtroom, around 20 women from the Dakamseh family, who were banned from attending the last two court sessions, rose to their feet and started clapping and ululating.

Cpl. Dakamseh is standing trial on charges of killing seven Israeli schoolgirls and injuring five more, including a teacher, on the morning of March 13 in the Bagoura area.

He is charged with premeditated murder, attempted murder, menacing use of a firearm and military mutiny.

The defendant alleges that he shot the schoolgirls because they provoked him and attempted to take pictures of him while he prayed.

The prosecution, however,

is charging that Cpl. Dakamseh had plotted to kill the Israeli schoolgirls.

If convicted of the premeditated murder charges, Cpl. Dakamseh could face the death penalty.

At the end of the court session, Military Prosecutor Lieutenant Colonel Muhanad Hajar prevented the court with the case file, the defendant's own confession and other evidence related to the shooting incident.

Presiding Judge Brig. Gen. Ma'moun Khasawneh decided to transfer the defendant to military psychology experts "to examine whether the defendant suffers from personality disorder or not."

At the same time, the judge decided to postpone the case until Saturday to hear Cpl. Dakamseh's testimony and to hear the defence witnesses.

JTC introduces new measure to collect overdue bills

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) Monday introduced new measures aimed at subscribers who default on their telephone bills.

JTC Director General Mamoun Balqar said that his company has "conducted a thorough study of the measures which he said will be more effective in ensuring that subscribers in the Amman area pay their bills within a reasonable time."

In the past, the JTC partially suspended services to defaulting subscribers in the Amman area, which used to cause a sudden rush of subscribers to JTC offices to pay and created congestion and confusion, Mr. Balqar said.

As of this month, he said, the JTC will begin partial suspension of services in three stages throughout the Amman area, which the JTC has divided into West Amman, South Amman and Central Amman, in order to avoid congestion at JTC offices.

Mr. Balqar urged subscribers to pay their bills for April 1997 at JTC offices, banks or post offices to avoid

having phone services suspended.

Partial suspension allows subscribers to receive, but not to initiate, calls. Subscribers in default of payment are entitled to partial service for one week after which services are suspended. If a bill is not adjusted at the end of a one week period, the JTC will cut the service entirely.

According to Mr. Balqar, subscribers in West Amman, who are linked to the Sweileh, Marj Al Hamam and Ila'a Al Ali exchanges, should settle bills for April and prior months, before June 20; subscribers in central Amman, whose telephones are connected to the Abdali, Marka and Naser exchanges, must settle their bills before Friday, June 27 and subscribers in South Amman, whose telephones are connected to the Ashrafieh, Mahes, Fuheis, Nazal, Abu Alanda, Sahab and Um Al Amad exchanges must settle before Friday, July 4, 1997.



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday meets Social Security Corporation (SSC) Director General Safwan Toukan and department heads (Petra photo)

Majali, SSC directors review corporation's activities

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali Monday described the Social Security Corporation (SSC) as one of the most important economic institutions of the country.

During a visit to the SSC where he met Director General Safwan Toukan and department heads, Dr. Majali said that the corporation serves as a very active economic instrument in local and international markets through investments in various development and production projects.

Dr. Majali said that the SSC should conduct periodic revisions of its plans and projects to ensure that investments of funds which

are collected in the form of premiums from subscribers are invested in fruitful projects.

Last month the SSC disclosed that its accumulated premiums since it began its services in 1980 stood at JD871 million which, subsequent to investments, earned the corporation JD370 million.

The SSC also said that its 1996 profits were JD61 million. The corporation invests in hotels, Jordanian companies and other entities.

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Anousir, who also attended the meeting, noted that the SSC's funds should be directed towards successful projects to increase its earnings in order to

accommodate increased spending on the growing number of retiring subscribers who expect to receive pension, as well as a possible reduction in the volume of the SSC's revenues.

Dr. Toukan outlined the SSC's activities and investments noting that the corporation's present assets are estimated at JD1 billion.

He said that the SSC services cover 350,000 subscribers through its 11 centres throughout the Kingdom.

Last month, Dr. Toukan announced that the SSC has finalised designs for the construction of permanent headquarters in Um Utheina. The estimated project cost is JD7 million.

Department chronicles Israeli settlement activity in W. Bank

AMMAN (Petra) — The Department of Palestinian Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Monday quoted a study conducted in the U.S. as saying that 26 per cent of the housing units built in West Bank settlements, 56 per cent of units in the Gaza Strip and 28 per cent of the units in the occupied Golan Heights are uninhabited.

The department also quoted another report published in the U.S. as stating that the Israeli government has plans to build an additional 9,000 housing units in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The U.S. reports on settlement programmes in the occupied Palestinian lands were published in the department's monthly bulletin.

The bulletin also reported that in addition to initiating construction at Jabal Abu Ghneim in March, the Israeli government last

month announced plans for expanding the Maale Adumim settlement east of the Holy City.

The department's bulletin also noted that last month the Israeli authorities attempted to evict Arab Jerusalemites by withdrawing their identity cards and decided to grant 200 of them Israeli citizenship in a bid to increase the number of Israeli citizens in the city and reduce the number of Arabs.

Last month the Israelis demolished 21 Arab homes in Beit Hanina, Hebron, Deir Sharaf, Huwara, Zibedhe, Yabad and Salwan, according to the report. The report pointed out that since the beginning of 1997, Israel has confiscated 30,000 dunums of Arab land for settlement and road-building purposes.

The report said that Israel's continued closure of the West Bank and the

Gaza Strip imposed severe social and economic conditions on the Palestinian people.

The bulletin also reported a tour of Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan last month by the Minister of Public Works Nasser Lawzi and Planning Minister Rima Khalaf with Department of Palestinian Affairs Director Ibrahim Tarshihi. The tour, the bulletin said, aimed to prepare the groundwork for the implementation of the government-sponsored social safety net programme to improve living conditions in the refugee camps.

The department bulletin said that the plan includes several infrastructure projects and the construction of public facilities. It is estimated that the government will spend JD173 million on the project over five years.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

• "Woyzeck" (with subtitles in English) at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 7:00 p.m.

PLAY

• "Adam... Alone" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

• Paintings by contemporary Iraqi artists entitled "Ecology and Environment in Iraqi Art" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until July 12 (except Thursdays).

• Photo exhibition of Hong Kong, sponsored by the Chinese embassy, at the Royal Cultural Centre, until June 19.

• Works by Abdul Basit Naqqash and Sa'd Hussein entitled "Heritage and Culture" at the gallery of the Jordan Plastic Artists Association, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 21.

• Art exhibition by Ibrahim Al Abdali at the Orient Art Gallery, Shmeisani, Issam Aljouni Street, until June 19.

• Spring Exhibition of Plastic Art '97 at Greater Amman Municipality, Ras Al 'Ain, until June 30.

• One-of-a-Kind, artists' book exhibit, at the American Centre, Abdoun, until June 25.

• Exhibition of works by Farooq Lambaz at Darat Al Funn, Jabal Weibdeh, until June 19. Also displaying an exhibition by architectural photographer Said Nuseibah entitled "The Farthest Mosque" and by contemporary Arab artists.

Aqaba environment project initiated

By Tanya Habbouja
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Protection against environmental hazards plaguing the Gulf of Aqaba is the focus of the latest project in the Red Sea port, officials said.

Al Mabrouka Trading Company (MTC) and U.S.-based EBA Waste Technologies have jointly completed a feasibility study to implement an "environmental project" that aspires to elevate Aqaba environmental protection services to international standards.

The project includes the construction of a reception facility and treatment plant for spent oil, bilge water, and ballast water from ships visiting the

Aqaba port. MTC co-owners Sharif Ghazi Ben Rakan and Mahamoud Khraisha said.

Approximately 2,500 ships enter the port annually, which are expected to increase in number as tourism investments grow, Mr. Khraisha said.

"We must stop polluting the Red Sea and bring the port city up to international standards," he stressed.

Ship waste is currently dumped into the sea outside of Aqaba, which eventually finds its way into the gulf, he explained.

"This project will set up a barrier to any environmental hazards caused by oil spills, sea dumping, or from the transport of goods that threaten the marine life or the natural

beauty of our coast," he said.

The plan calls for a self-motorised barge to collect ships' refuse and discharge the contents at an oil jetty. From here, a pipeline will transport it into tanker trucks which will then transport the material to a treatment plant located near the municipal dump site, according to an EBA statement.

"Any solid material, such as oil, can then be recycled," Mr. Khraisha said.

The treatment plant will house tanks and chambers where the liquid will be settled, skimmed and chemically treated to remove impurities and recover oil which can then be used as fuel or recycled,

the statement said.

A parallel aspect of the plan is the establishment of a land fill for the safe disposal of oily sludge from the treatment process.

The actual dumping site of the left-over refuse is still under negotiation with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment, Mr. Khraisha said.

He said that the company is also considering the installation of an incinerator to dispose of the refuse.

"With such facilities we will be prepared for whatever environmental disasters that could happen," he stressed.

Mr. Khraisha maintained that the environmental plan would

enhance tourism in Aqaba, as it will turn it into "the cleanest port in the world."

He estimates that the project will employ 200 workers.

The completed feasibility study was financed by a \$250,000 grant from the United States Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) and an additional \$250,000 was provided by MTC and EBA.

The project is pending final government and funding agreements.

"It will most likely be financed through an American investment company," Mr. Khraisha said.

The project cost is estimated to be \$21-25 million, he said.

French troops pull out of Congo before peace talks

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — The French army Monday began pulling out of the Congolese Republic's capital as talks on settling a bloody political dispute in France's former colony were due to start in the neighbouring West African state of Gabon.

The 1,200 French soldiers had helped evacuate more than 5,000 foreigners since June 5, when fighting flared between the Congolese army and supporters of former military leader Denis Sassou Nguesso.

On Sunday, Paris rejected an appeal from Congolese President Pascal Lissouba to leave its troops in the capital, Brazzaville, as a buffer force between the opposing factions.

A French military spokesman, Colonel Henry Pellissier, told reporters Monday: "We have already started taking out less essential equipment and in the afternoon the first troops will leave. They are already packing their bags."

"About 300 are expected to leave today for Chad and Gabon on 16 flights. Combat units will stay until the last moment to show a presence and to ensure security

at the airport."

Reception points in the city for evacuees who were kept there before being brought to the airport have been closed. An estimated 30 foreigners who did not make it Sunday were to be flown out Monday on military flights.

"If somebody calls to us for help, then we will still pull them out even up to the last minute," the spokesman said.

Sporadic firing of mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and machineguns could be heard around the airport through the night, but it was quiet compared to the night before.

"It appears relatively calm at the airport today and I believe it is the same in town," the French spokesman said.

France is keeping its embassy open.

"We have not contemplated closing our embassy but naturally we will take the necessary measures to ensure its protection," a Foreign Ministry spokesman in Paris said. He could not say how many soldiers would stay on to guard the embassy.

The conflict began when the army surrounded Mr. Sassou Nguesso's home in a crackdown on private militias and unauthorised arms in the runup to a presidential election scheduled for July 27.

The death toll from the fighting could run into hundreds, or even thousands according to some sources.

"The number of bodies in the morgue is uncountable," surgeon Kibongo Nazerne said at the main University Hospital Centre. "It has space for 140 bodies but there are many more than that."

After a two-day lull, fighting flared up again Sunday when government loyalists rained shells down on positions held by Mr. Sassou Nguesso's Cobra militia-men from the hills behind the city's airport, prompting the militia to retaliate with mortars and tank fire.

Some Western analysts feared the battle would be stepped up around the airport once the French airlift was over.

Earlier Sunday, envoys of Mr. Lissouba and Mr. Sassou Nguesso left on the same plane for talks in

Libreville, which will be hosted by Gabonese President Omar Bongo.

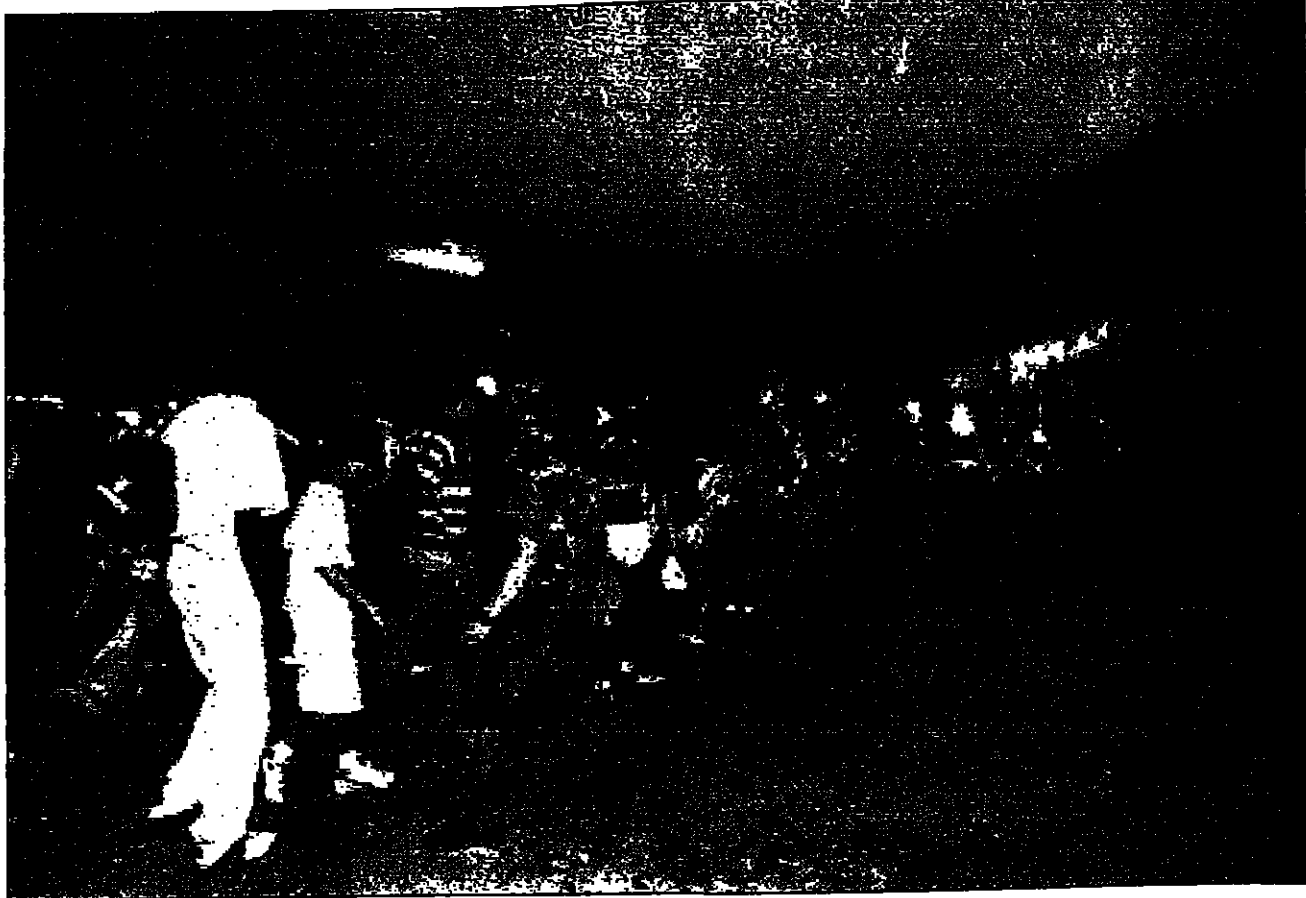
"If we did not believe negotiations would work, we wouldn't be going," Mr. Lissouba's representative Marius Mounbenday told Reuters.

Mr. Lissouba appealed for the French troops to stay on in Brazzaville until a lasting truce could be agreed.

"I am making a fervent call. I would have liked French forces, with ourselves and those in the positions opposite us, to have formed a buffer force, to avoid exactly what is going on today," he told French television.

He told Radio France Internationale the election must take place as planned and called for an African peace force to oversee polling. "These elections must take place. Democracy cannot be negotiated," he said.

Mr. Sassou Nguesso did not rule out the idea of an outside force. "The international community must organise the elections, check them and ensure security," he told the radio station.



Foreign nationals from the embattled Congo Republic capital of Brazzaville rush to board a plane, during a brief lull in fighting as France wrapped up its evacuation of French and foreign nationals. The 1,200-strong force has said it will start pulling out of the oil-producing former French colony from Monday, despite calls from some Congolese leaders for it to stay (Reuters photo)

OSCE proposes peace plan for Karabakh

MOSCOW (AFP) — Armenia and Azerbaijan have received a U.S., Russian and French peace plan calling on Armenian troops to withdraw from around the troubled enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, Interfax News Agency reported Sunday.

Interfax, citing an Azeri diplomat, said the peace plan would have Armenian forces replaced by a buffer force of Russian, U.S. and European troops who would be de-

ployed notably in the sole corridor between the enclave and Armenia.

Nagorno-Karabakh, for its part, would retain its armed forces and weapons, which would be monitored by the multinational force.

The plan was submitted by a team from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) which has already received responses from the two sides and the enclave itself. Inter-

fax said without disclosing the responses.

Azeri forces unsuccessfully tried to retain control of the ethnic-Armenian enclave in a war from 1988 to 1994 which left 20,000 dead. Baku insists the enclave is Azerbaijani land under the constitution of the former Soviet Union and calls on the international community to take measures to preserve its territorial integrity.

Dismissing the Azerbaijani claim, ethnic Armenians controlling the region have been consolidating their grip on the enclave. The plan was drawn up by France, Russia and the United States, co-chairs of a conference set up under OSCE aegis to try to resolve the situation.

A tentative ceasefire has largely been observed over the last three years, although several people were killed in clashes in April.

Greenpeace activists declare new state on Rockall

LONDON (R) — Greenpeace activists who seized the tiny, barren Atlantic island of Rockall rejected British claims to it Sunday and declared it the new state of Waveland.

Three protesters, a Briton, an Australian and a German, from the International Environmental Group hoisted the new flag on Waveland and named the capital Rockall. They said they hoped it would be the start of a peaceful revolution.

"We reject the governance of a country which permits new oil exploration despite professed concern for the climate. Waveland is a new kind of country designed to protect the global commons rather than to exploit it," they said in a statement released in London.

The declaration of the new state is the latest move in Greenpeace's campaign to protect the Atlantic frontier from oil exploration.

Chris Rose, the deputy executive director of Greenpeace, stressed that the group did not want to own the island but to protect its oil.

"Four nations want the oil around Rockall, we do not recognise their right to develop it. We have told (British Prime Minister) Tony Blair that we don't want



Greenpeace activists raise a flag to inaugurate the new global state called Waveland. The three Greenpeace activists (left to right), identified only by their first names, Al, Peter and Meike occupied Rockall last week in protest at new exploration for oil in the Atlantic Frontier region (Reuters photo)

Rockall itself but that the oil should be set aside for the common good. We are borrowing it until it is freed from the threat of development."

The three Greenpeace activists were taken by helicopter to the island Wednesday. They set up a base in a solar survival capsule screwed by steel pins into a rocky ledge.

Greenpeace said they

would be using their capsule as a campaign base for monitoring the expansion of oil fields around the island that is situated about 3,000 miles from the Scottish mainland.

Eleven exploration licences covering 58 full and partial blocks in the Rockall trough, where water depths exceed 1,500 metres, were awarded on June 4.

Greenpeace argues that

encouraging new oil development is senseless and a danger to both the atmosphere and the ocean.

The protesters offered immediate citizenship of Waveland to anyone who would pledge to defend nature, reform industrialism, protect the global environment and to secure peace.

Anyone wishing to apply was encouraged to contact the environmental group or to visit its Internet website.

Colombian rebels release army hostages

CARTAGENA DEL CHAIRA (AFP) — Marxist rebels Sunday freed 70 Colombian army troops they held for months and said they would agree to peace talks if the government met a broad list of demands.

The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), perhaps the most powerful rebel group still active in Latin America, freed the soldiers in exchange for an army pullout from an area larger than Lebanon.

Supreme FARC Commander Manuel Marulanda Velez said in a statement the rebels would agree to negotiate with the government if President Ernesto Samper met certain demands.

Mr. Marulanda Velez said Mr. Samper would have to

demilitarise an as-yet undefined area of Colombia, repeal regional state-of-emergency statutes that give the armed forces expanded powers, decriminalise popular protests, disarm rural patrols and make "democratic changes to the structure of the state and the political regime."

The FARC had previously said it would not talk with what it termed Mr. Samper's "corrupt" and "illegitimate" government.

Separately, Mr. Samper called the release "a flawless operation, a humanitarian operation" and told the soldiers there would be a welcoming ceremony for them in Bogota "on behalf of the government and all Colombians."

Earlier, the rebels handed

over the mostly teenaged troops to the International Committee of the Red Cross at a ceremony in the main square of this jungle town in Southern Colombia.

It was a long and embarrassing haul for the government since 60 soldiers were taken prisoner Aug. 30 when the FARC raided a remote military outpost. Twenty-three soldiers were killed in that attack and 30 injured.

Ten other Marines were captured while on patrol on Jan. 17.

The soldiers, who appeared to be in good health, were neatly shaven and wearing the same green uniforms as the FARC troops.

"I am really happy because they are going to release us and I'm going to be

with my mom," one of the youths told a crush of reporters after arriving in a military helicopter flying the Red Cross insignia.

Mr. Samper's government had cited humanitarian reasons for its decision to order a 32-day army withdrawal from the 13,161 square kilometres of jungle in Caqueta Department to gain their release.

Many hostages' mothers, who tirelessly pressed the government to give in to rebel demands, arrived here days ahead of the release by clearly jubilant rebels.

"It's as though he were resurrected," said one joyful mother, whose son had been mistaken listed as dead after one of the clashes.

Bangladesh awaits experts to put out gas field fire

DHAKA (R) — Firefighting experts from Singapore and the United States were on their way to Bangladesh Monday to battle a raging fire at a gas field where U.S. firm Occidental Petroleum Corporation began drilling this month.

"They are expected any moment and will immediately try to extinguish the blaze," an official in north-eastern Moulvi Bazar district, where the field is located, told reporters Monday.

Officials with the state-owned oil and gas company Petrobangla said the government was keeping a chartered plane on standby to fly the foreign experts to the blazing field.

Four Bangladeshis were injured in the fire, which broke out on a rig at the drilling site at the Magurchhara Gas Field after an explosion early Sunday.

Energy Ministry officials said the accident occurred when the rig's pipeline hit a "trap gas" layer at a depth of 840 metres, destroying all the equipment and sending flames shooting high into the air.

The Petrobangla officials said Occidental was drilling a development well for gas in the area, which they believed holds substantial reserves of hydrocarbons.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, due to return home Monday from Istanbul where she attended the Developing-8 Islamic summit, has ordered "immediate steps" to put out the fire and investigate the cause, state-run Radio Bangladesh said.

The radio quoted unidentified Occidental officials in Moulvi Bazar as saying that "all measures have been taken to extinguish the fire." Occidental officials in Dhaka could not be reached for comment.

Experts with fire fighting equipment from Singapore were due to arrive Monday to try to extinguish the blaze. Energy Secretary Tawfik-e-Elahi Chowdhury told Reuters.

He said another expert team from Occidental's headquarters in Houston, Texas, would arrive shortly to assess the extent of damage and find out when drilling could be resumed.

Petrobangla Chairman Mosbarraf Hossain told Reuters Sunday night that the fire was caused by leakage.

"We are uncertain when drilling will resume but expect the blaze will die down soon," he said.

Journalists said the fire had spread over a two kilometre area around the gas field. 20 kilometres from Moulvi Bazar. Police surrounded the area and prohibited visits except by experts and officials.

Chechens forces hunt for hostages

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen security forces deployed across their North Caucasus republic Monday in an attempt to locate five Russian journalists being held hostage and to crack down on crime.

The operation involved more than 3,000 men, including the separatist republic's anti-terrorist group and other units hardened during 21 months of war to drive out Russian troops between 1994-1996, news agencies reported.

Units were stopping and checking cars on Grozny's main streets and roads outside the capital, Interfax reported. Other units fanned out across Chechnya's villages.

A special 300-strong unit was searching for hostages, who include three journalists from the NTV television company taken captive more than a month and two more journalists, from the VID television production company, who were abducted last week, ITAR-TASS

said. Security forces were also cracking down on drug dealers, squatters, and oil traffickers, ITAR-TASS reported.

The operation, which began before dawn, was under the personal command of President Aslan Maskhadov, the chief of staff of the Chechen rebel army during the war, Interfax said.

Chechen Interior Minister Kazbek Makhmashev told Interfax that the operation stood a good chance of success because "an enormous amount of preparatory work has been done."

On Sunday, Mr. Maskhadov also pressed his campaign to crack down on armed units which were formed during the war and have since refused to follow the post-war government's orders.

Mr. Maskhadov ordered the disbandment of the unit led by Salman Raduyev, one of the most notorious renegade commanders, who several times has openly

questioned the peace process with Moscow and threatened to attack Russian towns.

Mr. Raduyev's men attacked the town of Kizlyar inside the Russian Republic of Dagestan in January 1996, then fought their way out through surrounding Russian troops together with a number of hostages.

Mr. Maskhadov will also disband a special forces unit called Borz, or wolf in Chechen, Interfax reported.

An official statement read over local television said that some of Borz's members "have embarked on the road of criminal activities. Criminal cases involving kidnapping and unlawful conduct have been opened against numerous servicemen."

Mr. Maskhadov plans to reorganise the republic's armed forces into a national guard of about 2,000 men, with a presidential guard of several hundred, Interfax said.

11 killed in violence across Albania

TIRANA (AFP) — Violence in troubled Albania claimed the lives of 11 people over the past 24 hours, police said Monday.

Three of the victims were killed Sunday morning in the capital Tirana, police said, adding that one of them, a 30-year-old man, had been killed by the father of a teenager he had allegedly raped.

Six others lost their lives in separate incidents in three towns in the south, northwest and north of Albania in what police said were settling of scores.

An exploding hand grenade killed one person and injured two children in another incident in northern Albania, while another death resulted when an armed gang fired on a car that refused to stop, officials said.

Albania has been wracked by widespread violence in recent months following an armed uprising against the government in March.

Hundreds of thousands of guns and other weapons were seized from army depots during the unrest in which some 1,500 people have died.

Meanwhile, a U.S.-backed pro-democracy group said Albania runs the risk that its planned June 29 parliamentary elections will be a failure unless it can significantly improve electoral conditions within a week.

In a statement issued late Sunday, the non-partisan National Democratic Institute (NDI), working in this Balkan country with funding from the United States gov-

ernment, said it may be advisable briefly to postpone polling in some areas.

The report, produced by a four-member delegation in Albania last week, also called on the country's most senior politicians to shoulder their share of responsibility for Albania's crisis and to urge their supporters to lay down their weapons.

Snap elections aim to restore calm after violence and unrest swept Albania following the collapse of fraudulent savings schemes earlier this year. Armed gangs still effectively control some parts of the poor, mountainous country.

"Unless dramatic improvements in the electoral conditions are achieved in the next week ... a postponement will not only be advisable but will be required to avert a potential electoral failure," the NDI statement said.

If conditions are adequate in most of Albania's 115 electoral zones, a brief postponement of polling in others may be advisable to concentrate attention on those areas after June 29, it said.

"The international community also should support such partially delayed elections," it added.

The main problems identified by the NDI were delays in registering and announcing candidates, choosing sites for polling stations, publishing voter lists and forming local zone election commissions.

It also cited security problems which could complicate

distribution of election materials and results, make it hard to find election workers, restrict campaign activity and "significantly depress voter turnout."

An unresolved dispute over the law on distributing 40 of the 155 parliamentary seats by proportional representation was another problem, as well as confusion among Albanians about the role of the international community, the NDI said.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the main international body in Albania to help with and monitor the poll, but the country's interim multi-party national unity government is responsible for organising it.

The NDI said conditions for legitimate elections may be achieved with enough effort and help from the international community. A delay could destroy Albania's fragile political consensus and further reduce security.

"However, the single most important determinant of whether the forthcoming elections provide a way forward for Albania, regardless of the date of the elections, will be the behaviour of Albania's most senior politicians," the NDI said.

Overseas OSCE observers at the weekend voiced several concerns which they said may justify a technical delay in the poll, but added that this was politically out of the question.

1 dead as fire rages through Bangkok slum

BANGKOK (AFP) — A night club hostess was killed and a man was missing Monday after a fire swept through a crowded slum in the Thai capital, police said.

A 23-year-old bar hostess, who worked in Bangkok's notorious Pat Pong red light district, burned to death

while a 20-year-old man was unaccounted for after the blaze tore through a section of the dense Klong Toei district, police said.

Police said several residents of the sprawling area were treated for minor injuries, including smoke inhalation.

They said the fire broke out early Monday in the

night club worker's house in the Patana Mai zone.

Fire officers brought the blaze under control after about two hours and were still dousing the area with water late in the morning.

Fires regularly gut parts of Bangkok's crowded slum areas, which are packed with makeshift wooden homes.



British supermodel Naomi Campbell is led by security into the airport after leaving hospital in Gran Canaria. Ms. Campbell was treated in hospital after a suspected drugs overdose Sunday (Reuters photo)

Naomi Campbell in Paris after health scare

PARIS (R) — British supermodel Naomi Campbell flew to Paris early Monday after receiving emergency treatment in the Canary Islands for what a hospital official described as a drug overdose.

The 26-year-old model's lawyers denied she had overdosed and insisted she had been rushed to hospital early Sunday after an allergic reaction to antibiotics. An airport official said Ms. Campbell landed at Le Bourget, north of Paris, at 5:22 a.m. (0322 GMT) aboard a chartered Swiss-registered private aircraft. No information was available on her whereabouts and plans.

Officials at the hospital on the Spanish island of Gran Canaria said the model was treated in the intensive care unit in the early hours of Sunday, but had made a steady recovery and was released Sunday evening.

"Naomi Campbell was discharged from the hospital shortly after 10 p.m.

(2000 GMT)," a nurse told Reuters.

A hospital official earlier said that Ms. Campbell had been admitted into intensive care after some kind of "overdose." The hospital would not reveal further details of Ms. Campbell's condition, but local media reported that she had taken sedatives.

However, a spokesman for Ms. Campbell, Jonathan Goldstein of the law firm Olswang, ruled out any kind of overdose.

"She wishes to make it clear that there is absolutely no foundation whatsoever to the story that she had taken an overdose," he said in a statement issued to Britain's Press Association news agency.

Local media reported that Ms. Campbell had arrived on the island Friday on the same plane as her boyfriend, 28-year-old flamenco dancer Joaquin Cortes.

At around 0200 GMT Sunday she was taken semi-conscious from her five-star

hotel in the island capital Las Palmas to the Nuestra Señora Del Pino Hospital, officials said.

Local media said the catwalk model had earlier had an argument with Mr. Cortes, who is in Gran Canaria with his hugely successful Gypsy Passion dance show.

Residents at the luxury hotel, where Ms. Campbell and Mr. Cortes had been staying in separate rooms, were reported to have complained about a heated conversation between the two.

Hotel staff said Ms. Campbell had appeared extremely nervous after the discussion and had taken some form of medicine, local media reported. The hotel would not comment on the reports.

Dressed in his trademark black, Mr. Cortes arrived at the hospital Sunday afternoon to visit the supermodel, who commands tens of thousands of dollars for a morning's work.

He spent several hours at

the hospital and later left to star in his hit show at a local theatre.

After being discharged, local media reported that Ms. Campbell left the hospital by a kitchen exit and was driven away in a Mercedes-Benz car to the airport. Photographers saw her smiling and chatting with her companions wearing a lime green jumper and sunglasses as she waited to leave the island.

Ms. Campbell has been linked for several months to Mr. Cortes, the long-haired flamenco star who is dubbed "sex on legs" for his steamy dancing.

But gossip magazines recently reported that the Spanish dancer had broken up with Ms. Campbell and was pictured with another woman on holiday in the southern resort of Marbella.

His Gypsy Passion show is thrilling audiences across Europe and North America with erotic dancing which blends flamenco, ballet and jazz.

Opposition forces launch new attack on Taleban

ISLAMABAD (R) — Opposition forces launched a new attack against the purist Islamic Taleban militia north of Kabul Monday, a Pakistan-based news agency reported.

The Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said guerrillas loyal to former government Commander Ahmad Shah Massoud had used artillery to pound Taleban positions at Pul-i-Matak, between the towns of Charikar and Jabal Os-Siraj on the main highway to the north.

At least four fighters from both sides were killed in the fighting, which was still going on, AIP said.

Mr. Massoud has been battling the Taleban in the Jabal Os-Siraj area since he broke out of his Panjsher Valley fiefdom more than two weeks ago to trap a Taleban force that had crossed the

Hindu Kush range into the north via the Salang Pass.

Opposition forces drove that force out of Pul-i-Khumri, the Taleban's last stronghold in the north, last Wednesday.

The Taleban have suffered a series of military setbacks at the hands of opposition forces in the past few weeks.

Witnesses said the militia had been using night flights to send the bodies of killed fighters from Kabul to the eastern town of Jalalabad to be returned to their families.

They said at least 20 bodies had been flown to Jalalabad Saturday and Sunday.

Meanwhile, Afghan women have been banned from working with foreign organisations in northern areas under the control of the anti-Taleban alliance, officials told AFP Monday.

"We received an official

note advising us that Afghan women would not be allowed to work with foreign organisations any more," said Michel Ducraux, head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Mr. Ducraux said the note had been delivered to at least four foreign aid organisations working in the northern capital Mazar-i-Sharif, now under the control of ethnic Uzbek leader General Abdul Malik.

"Around 15 of our Afghan women staff are currently suspended from work," Mr. Ducraux noted.

But Afghan women have not been banned from their jobs in the civil service sector of Gen. Malik's northern administration, he noted.

"In our case an exception was made for Afghan women working in the health

and medical sector," the Red Cross chief added.

Curiously, not all of the many foreign agencies working in Mazar-i-Sharif have received notification of the work ban on Afghan women.

Afghan observers have suggested Gen. Malik may be under pressure from anti-foreign elements in his administration, or the Uzbek boss might just be trying to appease local religious leaders.

"It's not clear whether this is a political or a gender issue," one said.

In May, Gen. Malik defected to the Taleban allowing the Islamic militants into Mazar-i-Sharif unopposed, but this would be an alliance quickly broke down and Gen. Malik realigned himself with other opposition forces.

Pol Pot capture imminent, Cambodian premier

ANG SNOUL (AFP) — Cambodian authorities expect to capture Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot dead or alive within two days, First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh said Monday.

"From now on the Khmer Rouge as a military force and a political force are completely dismantled. We can now really talk about the end of the Khmer Rouge," he said.

The remaining guerrillas are to make a formal declaration Wednesday that they will join the Phnom Penh government, he told reporters in Ang Snuol, 20 kilometres southwest of the capital where he inaugurated a pagoda.

"Even if someone does not accept this, I will accept this in my capacity as first prime minister and co-commander in chief of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces," he said in a veiled reference to Second Prime Minister Hun Sen who has said he opposed negotiations with the hardliners.

"I hope to take Pol Pot — alive or not I don't know, because the military situation is very tense — by today or the next day," Prince Ranariddh said.

"I hope that we will be able to capture him alive. If we do, we have no choice but to send him to an international tribunal. It is absolutely necessary," he added.

The Khmer Rouge leadership, of which Mr. Pol Pot was the head, is held responsible for the deaths of as many as two million Cambodians from execution, starvation or disease during their nearly four-year reign of terror in the mid-1970s.

Mr. Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge's "Brother Number One" who has not been seen in public for nearly 17 years, was reported dead last year, but it was never possible to confirm those reports independently. Despite renewed speculation in the past week that Mr. Pol Pot might in fact already be

dead, Prince Ranariddh insisted Monday that the guerrilla leader, who would be 69 years old, was alive but very ill.

"Yes he is alive, the people who are chasing him know very well he is alive, they have seen him," the prince said, admitting, however, that he had no other evidence to prove the point.

He said that guerrillas who recently split from Mr. Pol Pot's hardliners had freed six senior Khmer Rouge cadres who had been led away when Mr. Pol Pot's men fled their former base at Aulung Veng. The anti-Pol Pot guerrillas reportedly managed to stop six of the 10 trucks in the convoy which was heading toward the Thai border, he said, citing information from his top military commander General Nhiek Bun Chhay, who was in the Aulung Veng area Sunday.

Khmer Rouge Chief of Staff Ta Mok, known as one of the guerrillas' most brutal commanders, has disappeared, the prince said, backing off from earlier claims that Mr. Ta Mok had been one of those abducted by Mr. Pol Pot.

"It appears that Ta Mok is against Pol Pot. Pol Pot is very isolated," the prince held, adding that only Khmer Rouge "Prime Minister" Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea, Mr. Pol Pot's number two remained with him.

Prince Ranariddh said he had met personally with Mr. Khieu Samphan three weeks ago to discuss the surrender of the guerrillas but that the negotiation process had been thrown into disarray when Khmer Rouge "Defence Minister" Son Sen was murdered last Tuesday or Wednesday.

He maintained that it had been Mr. Pol Pot and not Mr. Ta Mok who had ordered the murder of Son Sen and his family.

Sri Lankan rebels reportedly kill 14 troops in ambush

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil Tiger separatists said Monday that they ambushed a military patrol in Sri Lanka's eastern Ampara district and killed 14 troops.

The clandestine Voice of Tigers radio, monitored in the northern government-held town of Vavuniya, said the patrol was ambushed Sunday.

Military officials in the east earlier said the patrol, which included special commandos, police and homeguards, had been ambushed, and at least 14 people were missing.

They said a search operation was continuing in the area.

Meanwhile, police and residents in Vavuniya, some 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo, said 26 people, mostly civilians, were wounded when a bomb attached to a bicycle exploded in the town centre Monday morning.

At least four policemen were among the wounded, they said. It was not immediately known whether any-

body had died in the blast.

Schools and shops in the town closed after the attack and security forces launched a search for rebel infiltrators, they said.

Residents earlier said the army had fired artillery overnight at areas north of the town, which had come under heavy attack by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels last week.

They said security in the town had been stepped up after last week's attack, and reinforcements had been called in to guard Vavuniya's army camp, police stations and other key economic and government installations.

The Sri Lankan military launched a major offensive called Operation "Jaya Sikuru" (Sure Of Victory) against the LTTE through the brush jungles of the northern Wanni region last month. It is aimed at opening a key highway linking Vavuniya to Jaffna peninsula, 100 kilometres further north.

The LTTE struck back in a daring attack on military positions last week at Thandikulam and Nochchimodai, immediately north of Vavuniya. However, no fresh fighting has been reported in the north since then.

Troops were flushing out the remaining rebels still believed to be hiding near Vavuniya, the Defence Ministry said Sunday.

The LTTE are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east. Military officials said naval patrols had also been stepped up in the seas off eastern Trincomalee district, some 250 kilometres from Colombo, to check rebel movements in the wake of last week's raid.

The government says more than 50,000 people have been killed in the war, now in its 14th year. The LTTE say the toll is higher.

3 Hindu bus passengers shot dead in Kashmir

JAMMU (R) — Three Hindu bus passengers were shot dead by suspected separatist rebels in the northern Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, police said Monday.

They said armed rebels, believed to be Muslims, stopped a bus carrying 32 people late Sunday and forced all six Hindu passengers aboard to alight.

When the guerrillas told the passengers to walk about 100 metres away from the bus, one escaped. The rebels released two others and gunned down three, who were high school teachers, police said.

The killings occurred near the village of Gool Gulab Garh, some 180 kilometres northeast of Jammu, the winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir, mostly Hindu India's only Muslim-majority state.

Police and hospitals say more than 20,000 people have been killed in the region since a separatist insurgency broke out in 1990. More than a dozen rebel groups are fighting for merger with neighbouring Islamic Pakistan or an independent homeland.

Most Hindus fled the Kashmir Valley seven years ago fearing retaliation after the Indian army opened fire against separatist demonstrators.

Rebels killed 15 Hindu bus passengers in a similar attack in 1993 on Aug. 14, Pakistan's Independence Day.

India has repeatedly accused Pakistan of arming and training the insurgents. Islamabad says it provides only moral and diplomatic support to the rebels.

15 held after riots in Indonesia's Madura

JAKARTA (R) — Police arrested 15 people after weekend riots on the Indonesian island of Madura in which a Muslim crowd burned shops, a Protestant church and a Buddhist temple, a police spokesman said Monday.

"Fifteen people have been arrested after the riots and we are still investigating the case," East Java police spokesman Colonel Sofwat Hadi told Reuters by telephone from Surabaya, capital of East Java. He gave no other details.

Residents said a crowd at Bangkalan on the strongly Muslim island off East Java rioted Saturday night after a service to commemorate the recent death of local religious leader Amin Imron, who was also a member of the regional assembly for the Muslim-backed United Development Party (PPP).

Some news reports said the Bangkalan riot was sparked by anger that civic authorities had held a celebration after the town was named one of the cleanest in Indonesia. Muslims felt the celebration should have been delayed until after the Islamic 40-day

mourning period for Amin Imron.

A senior diplomatic analyst said several riots over the past year, mainly on Java, which has around 60 per cent of the nation's 200 million population, appeared to have been connected to socio-economic discontent.

But he said there were also indications of increasing "Islamisation," particularly in rural areas, villages and towns.

"Some of it flows from gradually increasing Islamisation — not radical fundamentalism, but much more overt Muslim influence, especially in the villages," he said.

Madura was also hit by rioting following the country's May 29 general elections on reports that the ruling Golkar Party had swept the polls on the island, a PPP stronghold.

Golkar swept the national poll with over 74 per cent of the vote, while the PPP got just under 23 per cent. The only other party legally entitled to contest the poll, the fragmented Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), got about three per cent.

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'Knowledge of the other remains one of the indispensable conditions of coexistence and social intercourse'

Following are excerpts from a paper entitled "Muslim-Christian coexistence: history and current challenges", delivered at the Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, Torino, Italy, by Dr. Saleh Hamameh, professor of history at the University of Jordan, in May, 1997:

SOME TIME ago, the Department of Antiquities and the Jerusalem Franciscan Archaeological Institute organised a colloquium in observance of the centennial of the discovery in Madaba of the mosaic map of the Holy Land, a unique historical 6th century map.

Archaeological research in the last fifteen years has shown that no less than 46 Byzantine churches in Jordan alone continued to be used as such well in the mid-8th century and beyond, and that no fewer than five churches were constructed and paved with coloured mosaics in the Umayyad period.

Christianity spread among the Nabateans until the 4th century, when Petra, their capital, became a bishopric which took part in many religious synods, especially the Synod of Nicaea (Triningham, 105).

The designation "Christian" was first adopted by the followers of Christ in Antioch. Hence, the Christians of the Arab World today constitute an autochthonous community with deep and firmly established pre-Islamic roots, such as the Ghassanids and, before them, the Salih and Daj'imah tribes. The Arab World is the birthplace of Christianity.

An interesting aspect is that from the earliest days of Christianity, Arab Christians were free from the control of Rome. As a result, most were able to act according to their own religious inclinations and play an active and independent role in the formation and development of the Arab-Islamic caliphate.

Arab Christians supported the caliphate and took an active part in various aspects of society in the Islamic state. There was mutual tolerance and cooperation that can be better understood in light of the common theological bases of Christianity and Islam and the shared aspects of their community life.

Christians and Muslims share a belief in one God, the creator of the heavens and of the earth. They also share a belief in prophets, which is a central concept in both faiths.

All Arabs, whether Muslim or Christian, felt a new self-confidence with the spread of Islam and the establishment of the caliphate. Arabs had previously been governed by numerous foreign powers, but with the spread of Islam, they began to build an autonomous state of their own. This new confidence resulted in a feeling of unity among the Arabs, in spite of their differences.

Tolerance towards other faiths is a fundamental principle of Islam. It is a religion that accepts people of other beliefs within the framework of the Islamic state, particularly the Christians and the Jews. The following quotation from the Koran defines the position of Islam in relation to other communities: "If thy Lord had so willed, He could have made mankind one people; but they will not cease to dispute." We should remember, however, that the stance of Islam is not always the stance of those claiming to be its adherents.

Under the Umayyads, the Abbasids and the Fatimids, Christians were left in their jobs and positions. We read in Magrizi that every office had Christian employees and most of the scribes of Syria and Egypt were Christians. Neither was the participation of Christians in the caliphate state limited to simple jobs, as is commonly believed, but extended to higher positions as well, including those of ministers in the caliphate. It is even possible to suggest that the caliphate depended quite heavily on the Christians of Syria, for their culture was highly developed in comparison with that of the rest of the Middle East.

Finally, Christians remained a majority of the population of Bilad Al Sham (Syria) until the Crusades. These wars brought devastation to the Arab-Islamic Nation, including to the Christians of Bilad Al Sham, the Eastern Church, and especially the Orthodox Church. During this period, the middle class of the Islamic World was made up mostly of Christians. They were the most economically and culturally dynamic class of the time.

The fact remains that Christian Arabs are in no way alien to Muslim Arab society, a society whose history and culture they have shared for over four centuries.

At present Christians in Jordan make up about 5 per cent of the population, or even less, for their numbers, for a variety of reasons, are decreasing. Half of these belong to the Orthodox Church. The size of Jordan's Christian population, however, is not at all proportionate to their social, economic and, in some cases, political importance.

Jordanians are intent on promoting national unity and adhering to social norms that are beneficial to the country and the establishment of shared principles based on their belief in religious and political diversity, respect for reason, cause of democracy and progress.

Christian Arabs pride themselves with the fact that the Orthodox Church has historically been a long-time partner of Islam in terms of the mutual exchange and influence in fields such as scholastic theology, (ilm al kalam), the question of icons and mysticism. This relationship continues to be as lively today as it was in the past in the Arab-Islamic World.

But until today, unfortunately, Arab Christians' knowledge of Islam is based largely on Orientalist sources and, conversely, the

little information the Muslims possess about Arab or Eastern Christianity is taken from European writings.

It is true that the Christian and Islamic political elite in Egypt and Syria cooperated in establishing independent nation states, but they were unable to cooperate to establish links between themselves to the same extent on the level of religion. These ties were limited to shared patriotic objectives.

The Eastern-Arab-Christians suffer, as do their Muslim counterparts in the region, from the lack of a critical reading of their own legacy and the failure to form new views of their changing situation. Perhaps the pervasive anxiety in their circles about the rise of "Islamic fundamentalism" is an indication of the lost opportunities on their side to establish communication and rapprochement between themselves and the traditional official Islamic elite.

It is known that religious fanaticism paves the way for perpetual civil strife in pluralistic societies, whatever the basis of their diversity. In the words of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, addressing a group of Arab businessmen from Israel in Amman, "Sectarianism, racism and religious fanaticism have always been the refuge of losing causes in human history."

What troubles, indeed angers, Jordanian Arab Christians most is the lack of understanding among many that we, the Arab Christians in our country, were Christians long before Islam. Indeed, we can say that our first Christian forefathers had the merit of having spread Christianity throughout the world and that among them were the first martyr saints. This is a fact upon which we are most insistent and concerning which we are most sensitive, particularly because it appears from certain incidents in our small society that this essential truth has not been grasped. For

example, we hear from the lips of the ignorant and resentful the accusation hurled at the Arab Christian "You're a Crusader!", meaning that you are a descendant of the Crusaders and forgetting that the eastern Christians are autochthonous inhabitants of this land and that they fought on the side of their Muslim brethren, on the one hand, and, on the other, that the Crusaders attacked the Eastern Christian church and the Christian Arabs with the same ferocity that they attacked the Muslims.

I wonder whether this sense of "marginality" that Jordanian Arab Christians feel is the result of our being a religious minority or whether a feeling of marginality has begun to afflict broad sectors — both Muslim and Christian — of our society due to the pressures of modern living conditions and the absence of restriction of democracy — until recently.

I wonder, too, about our broader, deeper and more far-reaching identity. Have we in Jordan truly reached the level of a nation with a sense of patriotism or is our society still at heart a tribal one, that is, prior to a sense of belonging to a nation or religious community? It is, therefore, incumbent upon us, both Muslim and Christian, to stand shoulder to shoulder to solve the daily problems of our nation, both big and small, not by means of vague and high-sounding solutions that come from abroad, but by means of sound solutions through which Jordan can become a country of true nationhood and equality.

As for the field of education, and especially of "religious instruction", whatever assurances there are concerning religious plurality, knowledge of the religion of the other remains a conceptual goal limited to an elite group of specialists and members of an elite that call for spiritual openness, or open-mindedness. Nevertheless, knowledge of

the other remains one of the indispensable conditions of coexistence and social intercourse so that religious zeal does not turn into a confrontation in matters of daily life.

For this reason it is necessary to direct the new generation in our countries towards learning and respecting other religions and to teach them the shared elements of our religions so that the educational process produces a clear picture of mutual understanding and cooperation among races and religions.

In Jordan, an encouraging and promising direction has been taken in this field. In a paper presented at a Christian-Muslim Encounter in Athens in 1996, Dr. Adnan Al Bakht, president of Al Al Bayt University in Jordan, said: "I am pleased to point to the new plan that the Al Al Bayt University in Mafrq has applied in the history of religions and comparative religions and the dogmas of the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims and others... but the subject is still in dire need of study in order for the plan to succeed." In addition to this, a royal institute was set up in Amman, for the study of religions, in which all the churches and Islamic institutions are represented.

As the Jordanian Constitution stipulates, each religion should be taught in accordance with its own rules. In addition, in Jordanian private schools and those established by Christian charitable associations (such as the National Orthodox School) Islam is taught to Muslim students.

Let me conclude by saying that clinging to and preserving democracy will strengthen the solidarity of the sons of one nation and the feeling of brotherhood and cohesion of all the members of the Jordanian family, both Muslims and Christians, so that we may continue to work together. Our country needs to progress and flourish as it did in the early past and, as we sincerely hope, will do in the future.

Randa Habib's corner

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YOU KNOW, we are very polite and tender people. We tend to offer our gratitude or congratulations every so often in the form of public announcements.

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Isn't this nice? Congratulating each other, through the media, has indeed become part of our folklore.

"Riham wishes to congratulate her brother Ahmad on his graduation with honour in the University of Lithuania in the field of accounting," one ad would read.

Or "Fares X., his wife Ibissam, and their children Khaled, Tareq, Samir, Jamal, Lania and Rasha, and all their relatives, are thrilled to announce that their son Omar has obtained an outstanding diploma in his computer studies from the International University of Timbuktu, and are welcoming their son back to Jordan where he will serve faithfully his country..."

The ads would often carry a smiling photo of the brilliant graduate, surrounded by a bouquet of flowers.

New members of the cabinet receive the same treat from "friends" who wish to be remembered by their now "powerful" acquaintance.

Therefore, a newly appointed prime minister would spend three full days to shake the hands of hundreds of good wishers.

And when a public employee fulfills his duty and does, after all, what he is paid to do, he is congratulated. He may even appear proudly on TV, where a broadcaster will tell him: "Thank you for doing your job," knowing that public employees are labelled "civil servants."

Palestinians hurl stones...

(Continued from page 1)

a Palestinian was wounded by Jewish settlers who opened fire on Palestinian demonstrators near the Deir Al-Balah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said.

The Palestinian was wounded during clashes between Jewish settlers and Palestinians protesting against construction work being done by settlers on land claimed by a Palestinian, the sources said.

The Palestinians have also been frustrated by a prolonged deadlock in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

In the Hebron clashes, Israeli troops fired rubber bullets at some 70 Palestinian stone-throwers. Nine people were injured.

Palestinian police stayed away from the clashes, as they did Saturday and Sunday.

Last week's U.S. Congress resolution recognising Jerusalem as Israel's undivided capital as deeply angered the Palestinians who hope to establish a capital in the city's eastern sector. The final status of the city is to be determined in negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, a position that has also been held by successive U.S. governments.

East Jerusalem was occupied by Israel in the 1967 Mideast war and today is home to 180,000 Palestinians.

Several dozen Palestinians staged a protest Monday outside the U.S. consulate in east Jerusalem. The rally was led by the top PLO official in the city, Faisal Hussein, and the chief Muslim cleric, or mufti, Ikrama Sabri.

The group raised banners

reading "who is the U.S. Congress to determine the fate of Jerusalem?" and "this is an American conspiracy against Jerusalem."

The mufti said he considered the congressional resolution as an aggression against all Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims. "This is a blatant declaration of war against us," Mufti Sabri said.

The protesters tried to deliver a letter to U.S. Diplomats, but a guard refused to accept it. In the letter, the protesters warned that U.S. interests in the Middle East would be hurt because Washington is increasingly losing credibility among the Arabs.

"People are frustrated," said Moussa Abu Sabha, a Palestinian legislator from Hebron. "They see that the Israelis are not implementing the peace agreement and that the United States is biased."

Israel has accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of organising the recent protests in Hebron to force Israel to stop building a Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem and expanding Jewish settlements in the West Bank.

The Palestinians have said they will not resume peace talks, suspended in mid-March, until the construction stops.

Egypt has been trying to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table, but its mission appeared to have failed.

The Yediot Ahronot daily said Monday that Israel offered to halt the Jerusalem construction for five days to get the talks going, but that the Palestinians turned down the proposal.

U.S. to announce \$100m in additional aid to Jordan

(Continued from page 1)

living an election year," he said. "National elections will be held at the end of this year. And clearly, those who find it easier to be crisp and direct in opposing peace, in asking what the rewards of peace have been, will be well received, particularly where there is poverty, where there is very clearly, both the politics of despair, and to stone-throwing."

Asked about the "secrets of the Jordanian model for how one manages political change and the role of Islamism in (Middle Eastern) politics," the Crown Prince replied:

"I think that there is no secret as such. I think that what we have tried to do is

transparent; what we did was to hold national elections and to invite the conservatives if you will, the Muslim brothers, to participate in these national elections.

Of course, the great challenge for us in the future is to address the subject of civil society, to invite the debate not only between government and parliament, but to invite the debate between all Jordanians in the broadest possible sense, in the debate related to the political discourse, the economic, and indeed the cultural discourse. And I say 'the cultural' — I think it's relevant, because the issue of normalisation, of universalisation is an issue that is pan-Arab today. So I would like to say that the formula is, I

think, one that His Majesty has proven, of having the self-confidence to invite that particular debate and not to see it as the opening of a Pandora's box that is at the expense of the authority of the Royal House, but rather a transition which enhances and vindicates the presence of the Royal House into decades to come."

Other than officials and think tanks, the Crown Prince will be meeting with congressional leaders, with whom the administration has been consulting over the aid package to Jordan. On Thursday, Prince Hassan will travel to New York to meet with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, after which he will leave for Paris on a private visit.

Wife of suspected land dealer says he did not kill himself

(Continued from page 1)

Kamhawi, three Palestinians suspected of selling land to Jews have been killed since Palestinian Justice Minister Frieih Abu Medein said in May that such dealers deserved the death penalty, the kidnapping of a fourth was foiled by Israeli troops.

Mr. Kamhawi sold 15 acres of land belonging to residents in the Palestinian village of Kufri Kaddum to the Jewish settlement of Kedumim in 1988, Ahmed Shtawi, head of the Kufri Kaddum Regional Council, said Monday.

Mr. Kamhawi was arrested two weeks ago and taken to the Palestinian interrogation centre in the West Bank town of Jericho, said

Mrs. Kamhawi. Later that day, he was hospitalised in Ramallah, she said.

A Palestinian security official has said Mr. Kamhawi took ill in recent days after ingesting either an overdose of the pills prescribed for his heart condition, or poison sent by his family in a medicine bottle.

Mr. Kamhawi's family collected his body from the hospital and buried it immediately in a Nabulus cemetery. The body was not taken to the mosque first, as Muslim custom requires, and only about 20 immediate family members were present at the burial.

Land is at the heart of the Israeli-Arab dispute. The Palestinians hope to establish an independent state in the West Bank,

the Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem, and Palestinians who sell land to Jewish settlements are regarded as traitors.

A senior Palestinian officer, Colonel Tawfik Tirawi, said a week ago that he was holding several Palestinians suspected of selling land to Israelis.

Israel has accused the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) of being behind the recent killings. The United States has also condemned the killings and the idea of a death penalty for selling land to Jews.

The PNA denies any connection to the deaths. But feelings in the Palestinian community run strong against the land dealers.

Arab experts to debate...

(Continued from page 1)

Reuters on Monday by telephone from Muscat.

"Desalinated water is the most expensive water, but cheap resources are increasingly becoming exhausted in terms of availability in the region so demand for desalinated water is definitely on the rise and our job is to see how we can bring the cost down," he added.

"If we manage to bring it down by half in the next 10 years it will be an achievement," he said.

The United States, Oman, Japan and Israel have committed \$3 million each to MEDRC. South Korea has contributed \$600,000. The European Union (EU) is planning to donate \$3.6 million.

Diplomats said the Israeli team taking part in the meeting was already in Muscat, but that the Saudi representative would not be taking part in any talks this year.

"No political reasons were cited for his absence," one said.

Oman and its fellow Gulf

Arab state of Qatar have forged ahead of other Gulf states in establishing economic ties with Israel after its 1993 peace deal with the Palestinians.

But Israelis were told to stay away from several exhibitions and conferences in Oman and Qatar this year due to objections from other Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, angered by the stalled peace process and what they see as hard-line policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Palestinian legislators debate new...

(Continued from page 1)

explicit reference to Israel, Israelis or Jews.

Its provisions refer only to "occupiers," defined as "the government of occupation, its civilian and military institutions and its individual citizens."

"Any past or future deals with the occupiers concerning properties in Palestine are considered null and void," said the draft bill, a copy of which was obtained by AFP.

The text left the notion of "Palestine" undefined, apparently to avoid referring specifically to Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem which under the interim peace accords falls outside Palestinian authority jurisdiction.

But some legislators asserted the law concerned all territory which fell under the pre-1948 British mandate of Palestine, including present-day Israel.

"Any Palestinian who sells land in violation of this law will be considered to have committed national treason and will receive the

maximum punishment," the draft states.

The document does not spell out the meaning of "maximum punishment," but legislative sources said this referred to a 1967 Jordanian law which imposed the death penalty for sales to Jews of land captured by Israel in the 1967 war.

"Any foreigner who violates this law will be prosecuted on charges of harming the national interest and will receive a life sentence," it added.

The law also forbids anyone from acting as a middleman in land sales which violate the draft's terms and it sets out procedures to regulate land sales between Palestinians.

The Israeli government has already said it would consider any Palestinian law on such land sales as a violation of peace accords and null and void.

Palestinian authority officials provoked an international uproar last month by announcing that they would begin using the Jordanian law to prevent sales of Palestinian land to Jewish settlers.

Three land agents suspected of selling property to settlers were subsequently found murdered in the West Bank town of Ramallah and a number of others have been detained.

The deadly crackdown sparked sharp protests from Israel, which has issued arrest warrants for Palestinian security agents suspected in the deaths of two of the land sellers.

The United States called on PNA to withdraw the death threat and the U.S. Congress threatened to cut off aid to the Palestinian entity over the affair.

For Palestinians, the sale of land in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem to Israelis strengthens the Jewish state's claim to the occupied territories and undermines their goal of creating an independent state.

Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations broke down three months ago over Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policy of expanding Jewish settlements on occupied Arab land.

Arafat to visit S. Arabia, other Gulf states

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat will visit Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states Tuesday for talks on deadlocked PNA-Israeli peacemaking, a PNA official said Monday. "President Arafat will first visit Saudi Arabia for talks with King Fahd within the next 24 hours, and then he will visit other Gulf states," said Mr. Arafat's adviser Nabil Abu Rdainah. "The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has close relations with Saudi Arabia which

offers Palestinians political and financial backing," he told Reuters. Mr. Arafat last visited Saudi Arabia in December. Saudi-PNA relations, which soured during the 1991 Gulf war due to the PLO's support for Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, has improved since the 1993 PNA-Israeli peace deal. Saudi Arabia pledged \$100 million as part of the international donor states' support for development of the Palestinian economy, so far delivering around \$30 million.

Papers: Iraq, Jordan start oil talks

BAGHDAD (R) — A senior Jordanian official began oil talks with an Iraqi oil official to boost cooperation and meet Jordan's needs of by-products, Iraqi newspapers said Monday.

They said Ahmad Al Bashir, Jordan's secretary-general of the Ministry of Energy met with Taha Hamoud, Iraq's undersecretary of oil in Baghdad.

"Al Bashir started an official visit to Iraq yesterday to activate oil cooperation between Iraq and Jordan and meet Jordan's needs of by-products," Al Qadisiya newspaper said.

It said Mr. Hamoud and Mr. Bashir assessed the oil agreement signed between the two countries in January to supply Amman with 4.5 million tonnes of crude oil and refined oil products from Iraq to cover Jordan's needs in 1997. Since the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait — in which Amman sympathised with Baghdad — Iraq has been exporting 75,000 bpd (barrels per day) to Jordan part of which is charged at market prices and the rest at undisclosed concessionary terms.

Jordan's oil purchases from Iraq are exempted from U.N. sanctions banning Iraq from exporting its oil as punishment for its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The United Nations allowed Baghdad in December to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months ending in June, to raise cash to purchase urgent needs for Iraqis. The U.N. Security Council last week renewed the programme for another six months.

During the first six months of the deal, Baghdad bought vegetable oil, soap and salt from Jordan.

Khalaf: Jordan now ranks among leading developing states in terms of progress

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan has accomplished major economic achievements despite its limited and meagre resources and, by international standards, the Kingdom now ranks among the foremost developing nations in terms of economic progress, Planning Minister Rima Khalaf said Monday.

The minister, who was addressing a meeting of the Amman Rotary Club and the Petra Rotary Club at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel, highlighted the government's economic and social legislations and the plans to attain balanced development.

Jordan, she pointed out, has witnessed major positive developments as per capita income has risen and economic prosperity in general has been achieved.

In addition, Jordan has succeeded in building the necessary infrastructure for social development and for promoting education and health services, the minister said, stressing that the country has been pursuing the path of economic and political democracy.

Referring to the Aqaba, she said that the free zone is expected to enable Jordan open its trade to the world and help the country attract investments as well as stimulate trade, boost transport and telecommunications with other states.

Outlining the 1998 programme, the minister said the government will carry out a package of economic legislations, implement a reform programme, restructure the supply sector and embark on privatising institutions concerned with energy, electricity, telecommunications, cement and glass.

The government will also study prospects for leasing the Mai'n Spa, the Aqaba Railway Corporation and the Public Transport Corporation in addition to the management of the water sector, Mrs. Khalaf detailed.

The minister said the government plans to increase the number of Jordanian companies which benefit from the so-called "Green Lane" facility in connection with customs procedures, and will also reduce customs duty on imports, seek funding for its social safety net programme which is to be implemented in three years at the estimated cost of JD700 million to help the poor.

She concluded by emphasising that the government will pursue efforts for implementing an economic and social development plan and invite investments and secure funds to finance projects in the water and energy sectors.

Iran aims to export more fuel oil, diesel

SINGAPORE (R) — Iran, the world's third largest crude exporter, aims to maximise oil revenue by claiming a larger stake in the more lucrative petroleum products market, National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) officials have said.

The oil-rich country seeks to export more fuel oil and diesel on a regular basis when its new 232,000 barrel per day (bpd) Bandar Abbas refinery comes on stream in September or earlier, a senior NIOC official told Reuters in Singapore.

Iran's current refining capacity is 1.24 million bpd. Iran, a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), ranks after Saudi Arabia and Norway as the world's largest crude exporter with an OPEC quota of 3.6 million bpd.

The official said NIOC aims to gear most of its product exports to energy-hungry Asia, especially the Indian sub-continent, mostly through term contracts. It will target Europe when prices are attractive, he said.

The official said the output from the new refinery

would enable Iran to be self-sufficient in kerosene and gasoline, which it currently imports using an annual budget of \$200 million.

The Bandar Abbas refinery will produce 46,100 bpd of 90-95 octane leaded and unleaded gasoline 36,200 bpd of jet-kerosene fuel 69,500 bpd of diesel and 66,500 bpd of fuel oil. It will also produce 7,100 bpd of liquefied petroleum gas, 5,000 bpd of tar and 124 tonnes per day of sulphur.

The refinery will produce one per cent sulphur diesel first, and then, 0.5 per cent sulphur grade two months later. "We will not have much trouble disposing of the gas oil (diesel) as the quantity will not be too big," the official said. "Our main target is India and Pakistan."

The diesel will be shipped in 45,000 to 60,000-tonne tankers, he said. Iran now sells diesel on an occasional basis when domestic demand is low.

The country is already a major exporter of fuel oil, selling about 750,000 tonnes per month of 180 and 280-centistoke

grades. The official said the Bandar Abbas refinery can produce the higher viscosity 380-centistoke grade, straight-run and cracked fuel oil. Viscosity indicates the waxy texture of fuel oil.

A portion of the fuel oil will be used to fire power stations in Iran's eastern areas which are targeted for development, while the rest will be exported, he said.

A buyer of Iranian fuel oil said the 380-grade would be ideal for Singapore because it is used as bunker fuel for ships. Another trader said the fuel oil from Iran would be a bearish factor for Asian prices. The region is already well-supplied by refineries in Singapore, East Asia, the Middle East, as well as heavy fuel oil from Venezuela.

A European refiner said while Iran will not be a major seller of middle-distillates, the fact that they will be self-sufficient in kerosene and become a regular diesel seller "will see the Mideast awash with middle-distillates. This is not good for other Mideast refiners."

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	PTA
US Dollar	1.7380	0.6118	1.4450	115.05	1.3829	1708.00	1.9350	5.8580	
DE Mark	0.5754	1.0000	0.3517	0.3313	66.19	0.7952	0.8102	3.3754	
GB Sterling	1.6345	2.8395	1.0000	2.3602	167.75	2.2604	2.7844	3.1854	5.9912
CH Franc	0.8920	120.19	0.4230	1.0000	79.80	0.3564	1178.81	135.13	4.0581
JP Yen	0.0087	1.5093	0.5312	1.2549	1.0000	1.2010	14.82	169.78	5.0980
CA Dollar	0.7231	1.2863	0.4421	1.0445	1.20	1.2333	1.4132	4.2417	
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0183	0.3584	0.0847	1484.78	0.8103	11.45	3.4382	
NL Guilder	0.5115	88.85	0.3127	73.90	54.81	0.7070	872.19	2.0000	
FR Franc	0.1704	0.2961	0.1042	24.6209	19.58	0.2356	33.31	33.3100	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	PTA
US Dollar	1.7380	0.6118	1.4450	115.05	1.3829	1708.00	1.9350	5.8580	
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	0.2668	0.1888	0.1005	0.0807	0.98	409.57	0.9026	
GB Sterling	1.6345	2.8395	1.0000	2.3602	167.75	2.2604	2.7844	3.1854	5.9912
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.6782	0.5468	1.0304	1.0304	0.8831	1.01	422.00	0.9300
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	0.0304	1.2461	12.03	12.14	5077.52	0.9300	
Kuwait Dinar	3.3057	2.3404	1.2393	1.2461	12.03	12.14	5077.52	0.9300	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0211	0.1026	0.9810	0.0824	418.20	0.9216	
Lebanese L1000	0.65	0.4609	2.4416	0.2454	2.3687	0.1969	2.3912	2.2038	
Egyptian	0.2954	0.2092	1.1079	0.1114	1.0753	0.0894	1.0851	453.77	

Energy									
Oil	Last	Refined							
Brent	16.95	17.20							
W. Texas	16.90	18.95							
Bonny	16.95	17.20							
Dubai	17.18	17.20							
UL Gas	187.00	0.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	ITL	FRF	ESP	PTA
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4637	0.16513	0.34558	30.704				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.47345	0.16657	0.3937	31.3508				
KW Dinar	3.3057	5.74713	2.02224	4.78011	380.562				
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.61255	1.62311	3.63583	308.437				
CY Pound	1.9296	3.3536	1.1802	2.7683	222.001				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer							
Gold (oz's)	341.1	341.6							
Silver (oz's)	4.7	4.72							
Platinum (oz's)	431	436							
AL (3 Months)	1581	1584							
CU (3 Months)	2570	2575							
Zinc (3 Months)	1369	1373							
Lead (3 Months)	627	630							
Ni (3 Months)	7300	7330							

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	% Chg	High	Low	Pr Clk			
New York	DOW JONES	7782.04	70.57	0.92	7789.68	7712.37	7711.47		
New York	S&P 500	893.27	8.79	1.11	894.69	883.48	883.48		
London	FT-SE 100	4783.1	23.7	0.54	4796	4771.9	4757.4		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20528.35	-38.11	-0.18	20815.5	20451.8	20564.5		
Paris	CAC 40	2808.82	48.25	1.75	2811.86	2781.84	2780.27		
Frankfurt	DAX	3744.44	36.45	0.98	3751.26	3740.91	3707.99		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery							
Coffee (c/lbs)	211	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1614	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	330.5	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	130	Spot							
Soya (c/lbs)	23.13	Spot							
Tea (stg/kg)	145	Spot							
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot							

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- Chatter
- Trotted
- Goddess of youth
- Flying prefix
- Originated
- Thanks —!
- Fiction for children
- Map of land
- Elevated trains
- Whirling
- Realm
- Bundle of cotton, e.g.
- Sounded like a donkey
- Vocal composition
- Redbreast
- Departed
- Stadium sounds
- Like peas in —
- Hang about
- Actor Guinness
- Salubrious
- Diadem
- Big
- On only a few occasions
- Resuscitate
- Golfers' goals
- Ebb
- Seeded
- Layer
- "— want for Christmas..."
- Comic of old
- Repeat
- Nonsense
- Sahara sight
- Cossets
- Demigod
- Khayyam

by Dorothy B. Martin

9 AWOL soldier

10 Cowboy song

11 Me — of "Dallas"

12 Plank

13 Major follower

18 Ache

23 West

24 Wedding apparel

25 Studied intensely

26 Rugged cliff

27 Arizona native

28 Black, to poets

29 Picture show

31 Canyon

33 "When I was —"

34 Kind of sandwich

35 Fraudulent scheme

37 Reaps

41 Sea birds

43 Assist

44 Newswoman

45 Confederate signature

46 Showy display

47 Flower

48 Freeway entrance

49 Court procedure

50 Desirable position

51 Musical Home

52 Belgian river

55 A feast — famine

56 Commotion

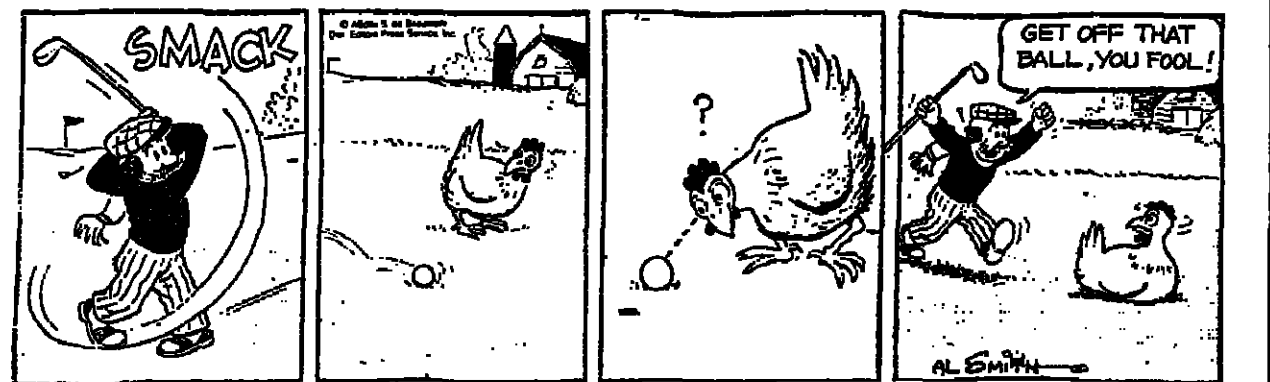
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson
Astrologer, Carroll
Richter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you get an invitation of a social nature today, be sure to accept it, as it could turn out to be a stepping stone to a more financially secure business endeavor. Later this evening will be fine for meeting with knowledgeable people.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Bring your finest talents to the attention of superiors today, and you will gain your rightful place in the sun. Get involved in community affairs and thereby you will receive the gratitude of fellow neighbors.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get into some activities you are not familiar with today, and you can learn a great deal for becoming quite successful. Reach an understanding with a difficult fellow associate and gain much recognition in the days ahead.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Instead of sticking to the same old routines today, use your imagination and creativity and get very favorable results in the days ahead. Later this evening will be good for meeting with close friends for recreational activities.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be cautious about changing any previously agreed upon plans with your family today, or you could ruin that harmonious atmosphere which exists. Later tonight you can seek out fellow associates for advice with a project.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It will be easier than usual today to persuade fellow associates to agree with your ideas, so take advantage of this situation. Be more understanding of others and thereby you can make your career activities more prosperous.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your creative abilities will be quite good today, so use them constructively. Be more cooperative and more romantic with your mate this evening and go to a special location which has meaning to you both.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is a good time today to improve the efficiency and appearance of your home, thereby making those who visit feel more comfortable and welcome. Retire early tonight, and get plenty of rest after a busy day.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Stay around those persons today who can help you to attain your goals and thereby make your activities much more successful. Any writing you do later this evening should be checked carefully for errors and omissions.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Financial and property matters should be given careful consideration today, thereby you won't make any mistakes. Seek out the advice of a highly successful person who has some ideas to make your business endeavours much better.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Any good ideas which occur to you today should be written down before you forget them and don't take advantage of them completely. You should not get involved in any silly disagreements which will get you in hot water.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Take your mate out on the town for a wonderful time later this evening and show him or her that you do appreciate them being in your life. You should not allow a pessimistic acquaintance to interfere with your plans.

Birthstone of June: Pearl
— Moon Stone

Rapprochement with Syria seen not worrying

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Organisation of Sydney Olympic Games in turmoil

SYDNEY (AFP) — Sponsors threatened Monday to withdraw from the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games as its organisation was plunged into uncertainty by hoteliers' protesting a proposed bed tax.

Sydney Olympic Games Organising Committee (SOCOG) board member and New South Wales State National Party leader Ian Armstrong said loss of sponsorship could cause untold harm to the Games' organisation.

"It could well cripple the Games," he told reporters.

"We would have to completely redesign the funding for SOCOG and (it) would have to be gotten from somewhere else."

"It's a serious problem, it's more than just a psychological one."

Armstrong said at least two major sponsors had contacted him expressing serious reservations about the new bed tax and threatening to pull out.

Australian Olympic Committee President John

Coates added fuel to the fire at a news conference Monday, saying there was a "very serious" chance some sponsors might renege on deals.

SOCOG relies entirely on sponsorship for its income.

The sponsors are concerned that hoteliers have halted negotiations with SOCOG over room rates and bookings for 17,000 beds needed for the Olympics.

The hoteliers are angry at a 10 percent tax on beds announced by the new south Wales state government last month.

A report by accountants Ernst and Young found demand for hotel accommodation would fall 8.6 percent a year, or nearly 225,000 room nights of accommodation, if a bed tax were introduced.

If negotiations break down SOCOG will be unable to legally guarantee priceless hotel rooms during the Olympics for up to a dozen major sponsors, which have pledged more

than 500 million Australian dollars (\$395 million) in funding.

Armstrong said he was not prepared to name the sponsors, but described them as "substantial".

"It's a real problem where you have got major sponsors saying they doubt they are going to get value for their money," he said.

"They have got serious reservations about their continuing patronage plus you have got an image problem for those three billion people who are supposed to be looking at the games in the year 2000."

Olympics minister and SOCOG President Michael Knight on Monday attacked the hotel industry, accusing it of breaking deals made during Sydney's bid for the games.

"The failure of some elements of the hotel industry to honour commitments made when Sydney was bidding for the Games has placed an enormous strain on the organisation of the Sydney Olympics," he said.

"However, I remain optimistic that a solution will be found and I am actively involved in seeking one."

Last week, Southern Pacific hotels group head Graham Wackett said negotiations with SOCOG over room rates and bookings for the Games had come to a halt.

Wackett said contracts had been signed for 6,000 beds, with the remaining 17,000 unresolved.

Hotels yet to be signed include the prestigious Regent and the Menzies, which are to be used by the International Olympic Committee.

The tax, on all city and inner Sydney accommodation, is scheduled to begin on September 1 and is estimated to reap the government about 64 million Australian dollars (\$50 million) a year.

Souness to manage Torino

TURIN (R) — Former player Graeme Souness confirmed his return to Italy Sunday to coach Serie B side Torino.

Souness, a former Scottish international captain who resigned last month as manager of English club Southampton, is expected to stay for at least two years.

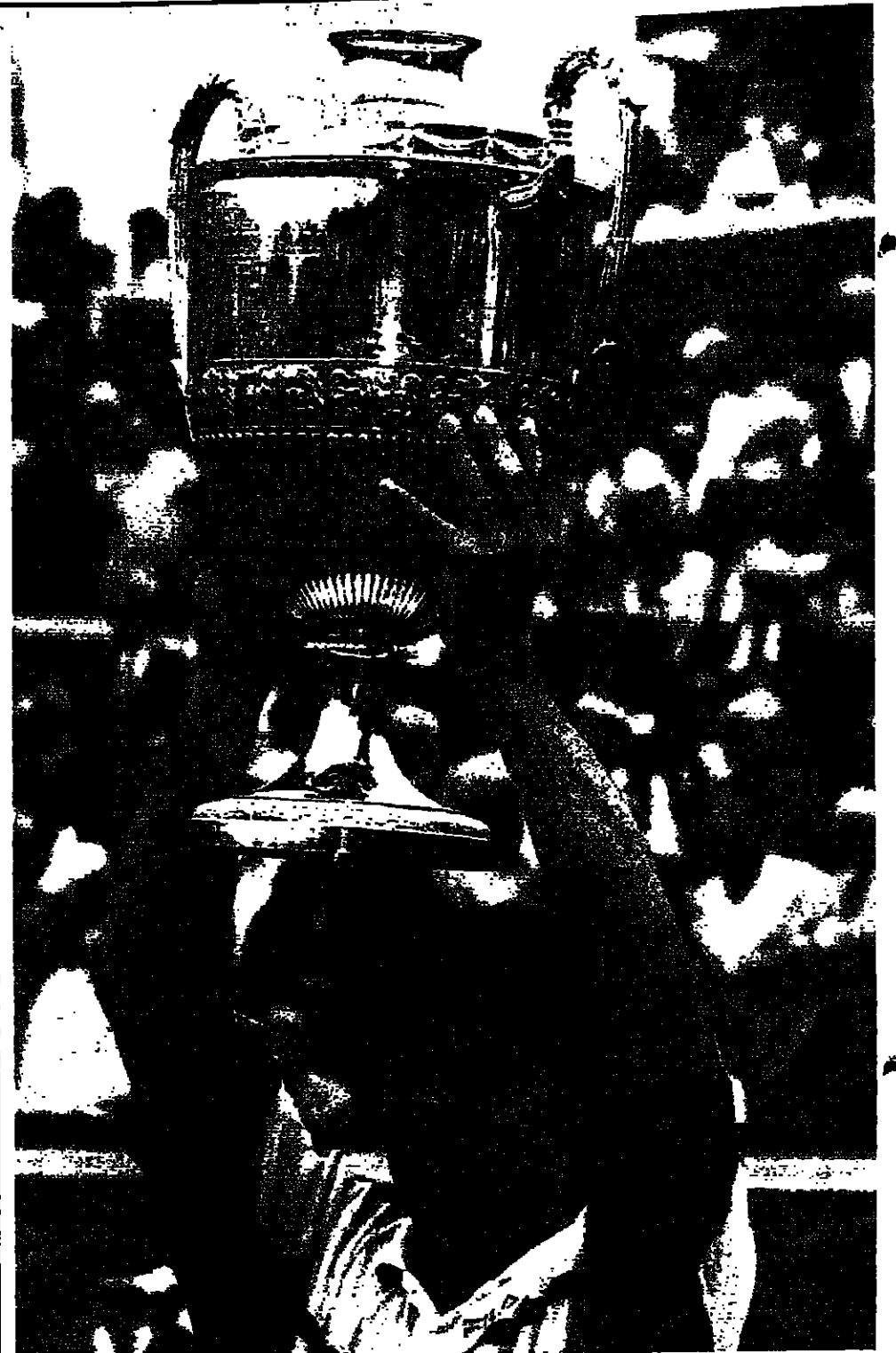
He played in Italy for Sampdoria from 1984 to 1986.

"I'm aware that Serie B in Italy is a very competitive league but I'm very confident," Souness told reporters in Turin.

He was there with another new signing, striker Gianluigi Lentini, to watch the side's last game of the season — a 4-0 hammering from Ravenna.

"I accepted Torino's offer because I found the directors as hungry for victory as I am," Souness said.

Torino, once one of Italy's greatest clubs, finished this season ninth in Serie B, their worst performance in record.



Mark Philippoussis from Australia holds up his winning trophy after winning the Stella Artois tournament at Queens Club. Philippoussis beat Croat Goran Ivanisevic 7-5 6-3 (Reuters photo)

Servers seize power as Wimbledon approaches

LONDON (R) — When Mark Philippoussis beat Goran Ivanisevic to win the pre-Wimbledon Queen's Club tournament on Sunday, the match confirmed the opinion of many grass-court critics that the modern game can be rather limited.

The final, which Philippoussis won 7-5 6-3, was over in less than an hour and produced only five points boasting rallies of more than four shots.

The pair, both standing 1.95 metres tall and brandishing rackets designed for maximum power, rammed down 27 aces between them.

Spectators might gasp at the sheer speed of the ball off the grass but after a while it became more fun watching the radar monitor to see how fast each man was serving.

Both players must now feel confident of a good showing at Wimbledon, where the courts are even faster.

Croatian Ivanisevic has tamed his temper, stands third in the world rankings and has been runner-up at the all-England club twice.

Philippoussis of Australia is progressing by leaps and bounds, has won three titles already this year and holds the record for the fastest serve measured on the circuit at 229 kph.

Greg Rusedski of Britain, runner-up with 223.7 kph, also came into his own at Queen's. Although he is ranked a lowly 44 in the world, he proved by reaching the semifinals that power rather than finesse can be the key on grass.

Power combined with finesse is, of course, the ultimate weapon and one which has propelled world number one Pete Sampras to three Wimbledon titles.

But when the American's serve was a little off-key at last year's championship, he succumbed to the strength of eventual winner Richard Krajicek, the big Dutchman who stands fourth in the service speed league table with 217.2 kph.

Sampras's serve was also off-song at Queen's this year. He went out in the quarter-finals to Swede Jonas Bjorkman but is confident of improvement with a week's practice on London grass.

"If I worried about all my defeats I'd be in an institution by now," Sampras said after his match.

World No. 2 Michael Chang can be less philosophical. He has never progressed beyond the quarter-finals at Wimbledon, was knocked out of Queen's the first round he played and is uncomfortable on grass.

He stands some 20 cms shorter than Ivanisevic and Philippoussis so is at a huge disadvantage on the surface.

Several top players naturally suited to slower surfaces, such as Spaniards Sergi Bruguera, the French Open finalist, Alex Corretja, Felix Mantilla and Alberto Berasategui have decided to cut their losses and have pulled out or declined to enter Wimbledon.

Their absence leaves the field open to the big hitters. Because so few players are experienced on grass, Wimbledon is the one grand slam event in which organisers do not stick rigidly to the rankings when choosing the seedings.

Ivanisevic is concerned that with the squeezing of the grass circuit and the deliberate slowing of other surfaces, the serve-and-volleyer is on the decline.

"They are slowing the surface of indoor courts and on clay they are making the courts slower and then using

showier balls as well," he said.

"Soon there will only be baseliners like the Spanish in the top 10... Michael Stich is going, Boris (Becker) has maybe two more years. Then there are not many of us left," he said.

He had no patience with those who considered the big servers' game dull.

"You don't come to a grass tournament to watch rallies — things have moved on since 15 years ago when they played from the back. Tennis is improving all the time."

Two evenly-matched big servers can also produce intense excitement.

Ivanisevic's 20-18 tie-break marathon in the third set of his semifinal with Rusedski had the Queen's crowd on the edge of their seats watching the sort of absorbing tennis duel that would grace any surface.

And Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov, French Open winner last year and semifinalist this year, showed that all-rounders can still prosper on grass when he beat Becker in the semifinal of the Halle grass tournament on Sunday and went on to win the title with victory over Petr Korda.

Change, for one, is not giving up on grass. "Given the choice of winning a grand slam I would always say Wimbledon," he said in a newspaper interview.

"In part probably because it's such a prestigious event and partly because it's a tournament people don't think I can win."

Hundreds of thousands will flock to Wimbledon from June 23 and millions more will take to their televisions to watch Chang and his ilk take on the big boys.

And, among the aces and smashes, maybe this year finesse will flourish.

Mariners stretch winning streak to five games

SEATTLE (R) — Following a sluggish start to the season, the Seattle Mariners finally are living up to their reputation.

The Mariners stretched their winning streak to five games Sunday with an 8-2 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers in an interleague game.

Jamie Moyer allowed two runs over six innings and Paul Sorrento and Jose Cruz Jr. each homered and drove in three runs for Seattle.

"It doesn't surprise me what is going on," said Mariners manager Lou Piniella. "Our kids can swing the bat. Our problem this year hasn't been scoring."

Moyer (6-2) scattered four hits and did not walk anyone.

Scott Sanders yielded two hits in three scoreless innings to notch his first save since April 26, 1994 as a member of the San Diego Padres. The Mariners have won 11 of their last 13 games and seven in a row at home.

high 11 in 6 2/3 innings to lift the Athletics to a 5-2 victory over the Colorado Rockies.

Stairs hit his 10th homer of the season, a three-run shot off Kevin Ritz (5-6) in the second inning, and added a two-run double in the fourth for a 5-1 lead.

Prieto (5-4) yielded both Colorado runs along with seven hits with five walks for the victory.

At Anaheim, J.T. Snow hit a two-run homer in the fourth inning and William Vanlandingham (4-4) and four relievers combined on a seven-hitter as the San Francisco Giants defeated the Angels 4-1.

Stan Javier singled with two outs in the fourth against starter Jason Dickson (8-3) and Snow hit a 1-1 pitch that just cleared the right-field fence for his fourth home run, giving the Giants a 2-0 lead.

Orioles complete sweep of Braves

In what very well may be a preview of the World Series, the Baltimore Orioles got much the better of the Atlanta Braves.

An opposite field two-run homer by Lenny Webster in the 10th inning Sunday lifted the Orioles to a 5-3 victory over Atlanta and a sweep of the three-game series between the top team in each league.

"Maybe we made a statement, but it doesn't count until October," Orioles manager Davey Johnson said. "It was awfully fun even though we were dead tired."

Atlanta closer Mark Wohlers (2-2) retired Rafael Palmeiro on a groundout to start the top of the 10th. Cal Ripken bounced a single up the middle before B.J. Surhoff flied to left. Webster then lined a 1-0 pitch over his first complete game of the year and F.P. Santangelo's two-run double capped a four-run fourth as the Expos won their ninth in a row with a 10-2 thumping of the Detroit Tigers.

The Expos, who are 10 games over .500, are one win shy of matching the club record of 10 consecutive victories.

At Philadelphia, Alex Gonzalez homered and tied a career high with four RBI



Toronto Blue Jays Joe Carter takes his helmet off to the crowd as he celebrates his 2,000th career hit, a double which drove in two runs in the first inning of an interleague game against the Philadelphia Phillies (Reuters photo)

this series.

The Orioles have won seven of nine, improving baseball's best record to 45-19. Atlanta suffered its season-high fourth straight loss.

At Montreal, Jeff Juden (7-2) pitched a six-hitter for his first complete game of the year and F.P. Santangelo's two-run double capped a four-run fourth as the Expos won their ninth in a row with a 10-2 thumping of the Detroit Tigers.

The Expos, who are 10 games over .500, are one win shy of matching the club record of 10 consecutive victories.

At Philadelphia, Alex Gonzalez homered and tied a career high with four RBI

and Pat Hentgen pitched a six-hitter as the Toronto Blue Jays routed the Phillies 11-1.

At Pittsburgh, Kevin Appier fought off a tight right hamstring long enough to throw five scoreless innings and finally pick up his 10th career win in his eighth attempt as the Kansas City Royals cruised to an 8-1 win over the Pirates.

Jose Offerman had four hits for the Royals and David Howard three.

At Cincinnati, pinch-hitter Harold Baines drilled a three-run homer to key a two-out, five-run fifth-inning rally and Jorge Fabregas had four hits and five RBI to pace the Chicago White Sox to a 14-

6 win over the Reds.

Fabregas, Ray Durham and Albert Belle also homered for the White Sox and Ozzie Guillen contributed four hits.

At St. Louis, Charles Nagy allowed two hits over seven scoreless innings and Omar Vizquel's bases-loaded triple snapped a scoreless tie and sparked a four-run eighth inning as the Cleveland Indians routed the Cardinals 9-2.

Nagy (8-3), who threw just 65 pitches, retired 15 straight batters at the plate.

At Chicago, Frank Castillo made the most of an unexpected start with 6 1/3 strong innings and Sammy Sosa drove in the go-ahead run in the third as the Cubs held on for a 4-3 decision over the Milwaukee Brewers.

Castillo (4-8) was removed from the rotation last week but got the assignment when the Cubs juggled the rotation for their upcoming intracity series against the White Sox.

At Houston, catcher Terry Steinbach bobbled Pat Listach's squeeze bunt with the bases loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning, allowing Derek Bell to score the winning run to give the Astros a 3-2 victory over the Minnesota Twins.

Eddie Guardado (0-2) walked Bell with one out and was relieved by Mike Trombley, who walked Sean Berry and Brad Ausmus to load the bases. With Bell racing home, Listach bunted a 1-0 pitch in front of the plate and Steinbach could not pick up the ball.

In Florida, second baseman Pat Kelly quickly went from hero to goat when he allowed a potential game-ending double play grounder go through his legs for a two-run error, giving the Marlins a 6-5 victory over the New York Yankees in the second game of a double header.

In New York, Vaughn Eshelman allowed four hits over seven innings and Nomar Garciaparra and Scott Haneberg homered to power the Boston Red Sox to a 10-1 rout of the Mets.

Eshelman (1-1) gave up one run, walked one and struck out four in his second start of the season.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:634144	CINEMA TEL:634144	CINEMA TEL:699238	CINEMA TEL:677420	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155
	PHILADELPHIA "1"	PHILADELPHIA "2"	PLAZA	CONCORD	
	Laurence Fishburne, Stephen Baldwin & Salma Hayek ... in	Diane Keaton, Goldie Hawn & Bette Midler ... in	Adel Imam, Shireen & Saeed Saleh ... in	CONCORD "1"	
	FLED	THE FIRST WIVES CLUB	BAKHIT WA ADILEH (P.2) (AL JARDAL WAL KANKAH)	JERRY MAGUIRE	
	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	
				CONCORD "2"	The actors are on annual leave. The theatre will reopen July 2, 1997
				Michael Jordan...in	
				SPACEJAM	
				Shows: 3:30, 6:00	

U.S. athletics finds new star in Marion Jones

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana (AFP) — Troubled U.S. athletics found a new star to celebrate on Sunday as Marion Jones completed a 100m and long jump double on the final day of the National Championships.

The 22-year-old Californian, who won the 100m on Friday, became the first woman to do the double in nine years when she won the long jump on Sunday with a leap of 6.93m.

She recorded her own personal best, and the best distance in the world this year. She also edged veteran U.S. star Jackie Joyner-Kersey by two centimetres.

Joyner-Kersey, 35, had won the seven previous national titles in the long jump, but says this will be her last season. Her runner-up finish was enough to put her on the U.S. team for the world championships in Athens August 2-10.

Joyner-Kersey, Olympic champion and two-time world champion in the long jump, was in the lead with her fifth of six jumps when Jones responded with her winning

leap.

Like Joyner-Kersey before her, Jones also starred in basketball in high school and at university. As a first-year student at the University of North Carolina she was the starting point guard on the national championship team.

But basketball cut into her athletics training. And last year foot stress fractures prevented her from training for the 1996 Olympic trials.

Jones said it was a thrill to beat her idol, but mostly she was glad to be healthy and competitive.

"It just feels good to be back in track full-time and competing at a level I expect to compete at," she said. "This is where my future is at."

Joyner-Kersey said she expected Jones to be around for a long time. "I've always admired Marion, even when she was in high school," Joyner-Kersey said. "She has great talent and is a great competitor, and that is a deadly combination."

Mantilla and heat get better of Kuerten

BOLOGNA, Italy (R) —

Felix Mantilla of Spain recovered from a set down to beat a tired and heat-stricken Gustavo Kuerten, the French Open champion, in the final of the Bologna International Clay-Court Tournament on Sunday.

Mantilla, the tournament's second seed, ended the Brazilian's winning streak of 16 matches.

Ranked 26 in the world, Mantilla became only the fourth Spaniard to win the Bologna Tournament, triumphing 4-6 6-2 6-1 in sweltering heat to earn his second ATP title.

A wild card entry to the tournament, Mantilla pounced on a string of errors by his 20-year-old opponent, who was seeded eighth.

Kuerten, a hero in Brazil following his surprise victory in the French Open last Sunday, appeared well below his recent form.

Kuerten started well but appeared to wilt in the humid 32 Celsius (90 Fahrenheit) heat, twice summoning the tournament doctor in the third set. He was given a salt and mineral tablet to combat dehydration.

Mantilla looked cool and

composed as he carefully placed his shots past the stranded Brazilian.

At 3-0 down in the final set, the crowd generously applauded the Brazilian, aware he was in trouble. He managed to pull one game back on his service but again at changeover looked in trouble as he sat down with an ice-pack on the back of his neck.

Kuerten later recovered sufficiently to partner compatriot Fernando Meligeni to a 6-2 7-5 doubles final victory over Americans Dave Randall and Jack Waite in cooler conditions.

Tauziat wins DFS Classic title

BIRMINGHAM, England (R) — Nathalie Tauziat of France beat Yayuk Basuki of Indonesia 2-6 6-2 6-2 to win the DFS Classic at Edgbaston on Sunday, a year after she was beaten in the 1996 final.

The second seed's victory followed her 6-4 6-4 triumph earlier in the day over Australian Kristine Kunce, who had to qualify for the event.

That success seemed to take a toll in the final against fourth seed Basuki when she lost five games in succession in the first set against the Indonesian.

But Tauziat turned it around in the second set by winning five games in a row herself for a 5-0 lead.

When she broke Basuki's serve 4-2 in the final set, the Indonesian had no reply.

Basuki also had a busy day at the rain-delayed event, she had knocked out top-seeded Irina Spirlea of Romania 7-6 6-1 in her semifinal an hour before the final.

Spirlea had in turn ousted Dominique Van Roost of Belgium 6-4 6-4 in a morning quarter-final.

Schumacher wins in Montreal to regain lead

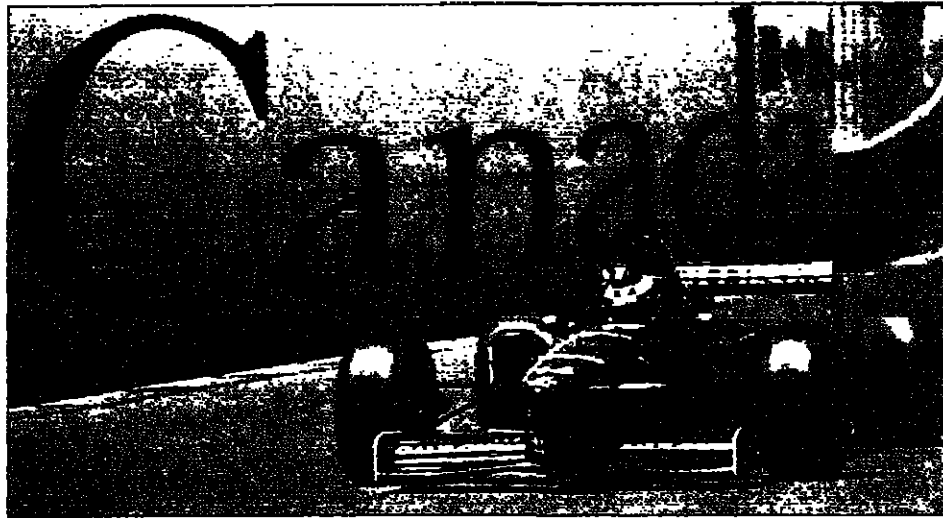
MONTREAL (R) — Twice world champion Michael Schumacher of Germany regained the lead in the World Drivers Championship in chaotic and exceptional circumstances when the crash-hit Canadian Grand Prix was brought to an early end Sunday.

Schumacher, in his Ferrari, was leading after 55 of the 69 scheduled laps when the race was red-flagged to a halt three laps after Frenchman Olivier Panis had crashed heavily in his Prost car.

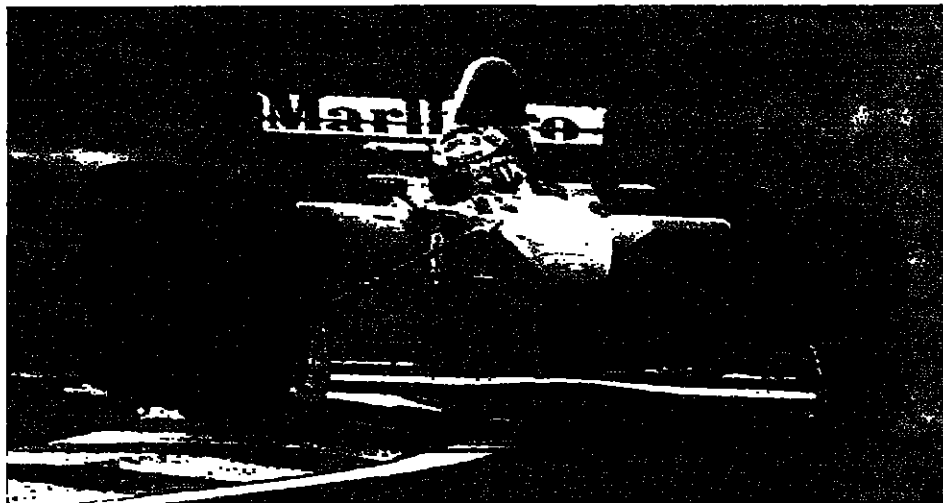
Panis was lifted carefully from the wreckage of his vehicle, put on a stretcher and taken to the circuit medical centre while the race continued behind a safety car before being stopped.

Schumacher was declared the victor by 2.7 seconds ahead of Frenchman Jean Alesi in a Benetton and Italian Giancarlo Fisichella in a Jordan.

But he was fortunate to win because Briton David Coulthard, who was in a commanding 31 seconds lead after 50 laps, lost the ascendancy when he stalled after a pit stop and also because local hero and championship favourite Jacques Villeneuve of Canada had crashed out of the race in his



French driver Olivier Panis in action during the Canadian Grand Prix, June 15. Panis crashed his car into a wall and sustained injuries after 55 of the 69 scheduled laps when the race was red-flagged to a halt three laps after the crash (Reuters photo)



German Michael Schumacher drives his Ferrari to victory in the Canadian Grand Prix in Montreal, June 15. The race was halted after 56 laps when Olivier Panis crashed his Prost-Mugen-Honda and Schumacher was awarded the victory (Reuters photo)

Williams on the second lap.

Capello aims to take Milan back to the top

MILAN (AFP) — Fabio Capello pledged on Monday to take AC Milan back to the top of Italian football next season, when he will be coaching a new-look team without room for Roberto Baggio.

Capello, who left here last summer for Real Madrid, announced his return immediately after Real won the Spanish championship at the weekend.

The Italian coach had guided Milan to four league titles and the European Cup during his five seasons in charge. In his absence, the club had their worst season in 15 years — finishing 11th in the Serie A.

"We're going to be starting afresh after a very bad season, and there's every reason to think the next one is going to be better," Capello told the Gazzetta dello Sport.

"Milan cannot get things wrong for two seasons on the trot," Capello said he would not be making predictions.

"There's no point trying to make calculations over what can be won or lost next season — Milan simply have to win matches, that's all. And that's what we'll be sending out to do," he said.

"The Italian Cup will be of secondary importance, and since we're not in a European competition, we'll be concentrating everything on the championship. So at least we'll have one advantage over the other sides — we won't be devoting our energies to anything else."

Capello, who will be taking over from Arrigo Sacchi for a second time here, predicted changes in the side — with some important arrivals and equally important departures.

Asked about Baggio and playmaker Dejan Savicevic, Capello revealed: "they're both on the market. But if they don't find anything that suits them, they'll stay with us."

"I've explained this to Baggio and he has understood that the club and I have decided on a programme of renewal."

Baggio has been linked with a move abroad or to Napoli, while Savicevic is being sought by French club Olympique-Marseille.

As for Franco Baresi, who is heading upstairs for an executive post at Milan, Capello admitted he had not tried to persuade the leg-

endary skipper to stay on for a 21st season.

"No, because as I've said, it's time for new faces," Capello said. "But I'm glad that he's staying at Milan as a club executive."

There is now a two-man race for the captain's armband, between Paolo Maldini, skipper of the Italian National Team, and Alessandro Costacurta.

As for the new arrivals, Capello was most excited about Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert.

"He's a great centre forward...Kluivert and George

Weah can match Ronaldo," he said.

The 20-year-old Brazilian, who helped Bobby Robson's Barcelona win the European Cup Winners Cup, is still hoping to complete his on-loan transfer to Inter Milan.

Capello has Inter on a list of four clubs standing in Milan's way of another league triumph next season.

"Juventus, by tradition," he said, "but Lazio have also built up an excellent squad and then there's Parma, especially if they manage to sign Denilson, who we had wanted to bring to Madrid

last September.

"And naturally there are our cousins (Inter Milan), with Ronaldo."

Capello, meanwhile, had no explanation for Milan's recent miserable season, which included a 6-1 defeat to Juventus at San Siro and surrender in the group phase of the European Champions League.

"I still find it inexplicable," he said, "because I was convinced that Milan would have a great season."

LOST

A family registration book and two American passports. I. Fayed Mahmoud Mohammad Bani Mohammad, hereby announces that I have lost my own family registration book, issued in Jerash, and two American passports of my daughters Ayah and Batoul issued in California. In which registration numbers and dates of issuance I do not recall. If found, please hand over to the nearest police station or call

Tel. 247897. A reward will be granted to anyone who finds them.

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - Neither vulnerable, as

South you hold:

AQ1084 710 AK92 AK5

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1a Pass 2c Pass

What do you bid now?

A - It is simply a matter of

whether your hand is good enough

for a high reverse or whether you

should be content with a quiet

spades. Your intermediates and the

pair of aces should sway you to

three diamonds. If you even con-

templated bidding some number of

no trump, there's a lot you need to

learn about bidding!

Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South

you hold:

AQJ973 742 01082 AQ3

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1a Pass 2a Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Partner, who surely has a

spade void, is still doubling for

takeout. To force you to bid at the

three-level, North should have a

pretty good hand and you can

expect to contribute two or three

tricks to the defense. Convert to

penalties by passing.

Q. 3 - Both vulnerable, as South

you hold:

AQ83 0A10 0K93 AAJ10

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1a Pass 1c Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Without East's intervention, a

jump to two no trump would have

been clear. Now you have to decide

between the same action despite a

tentative holding in the enemy suit,

or a jump to three hearts with only

three-card support and no ruffing

value. Our vote goes to two no

trump as the lesser evil.

Q. 4 - As South, vulnerable, you

hold:

AA10932 7A108 0A8 AA72

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1NT Pass 2a Pass

What do you bid now?

A - This is simply a question of

valuation. The four aces and ruffing

value make this hand worth more

like 19 points than 16. To treat it as

a minimum and pass is a gross

dereliction of duty. Bid four spades,

confidently.

Q. 5 - As South, vulnerable, you

hold:

AAK6 7Void 0AKJ74 AQ9A43

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1c Pass 1a Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Partner's spade response has

improved your hand considerably.

Had North bid one heart, you would

have been worth only a two-club

rebid. Now we feel you must do

more, so we opt for three clubs —

and will tread warily for the rest of

the auction.

Q. 6 - Neither vulnerable, as

South you hold:

AA8762 0A7 0A08 0543

The bidding has proceeded:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1a Pass 2a Pass

What do you bid now?

A - Obviously, the choice lies

between two no trump or two

spades. Hands with a wealth of aces

usually play better in a suit con-

tract, but try not to rebid weak live-

card majors if there is an alterna-

tive. Here the spade suit is so shod-

dy that we would opt for two no

trump.

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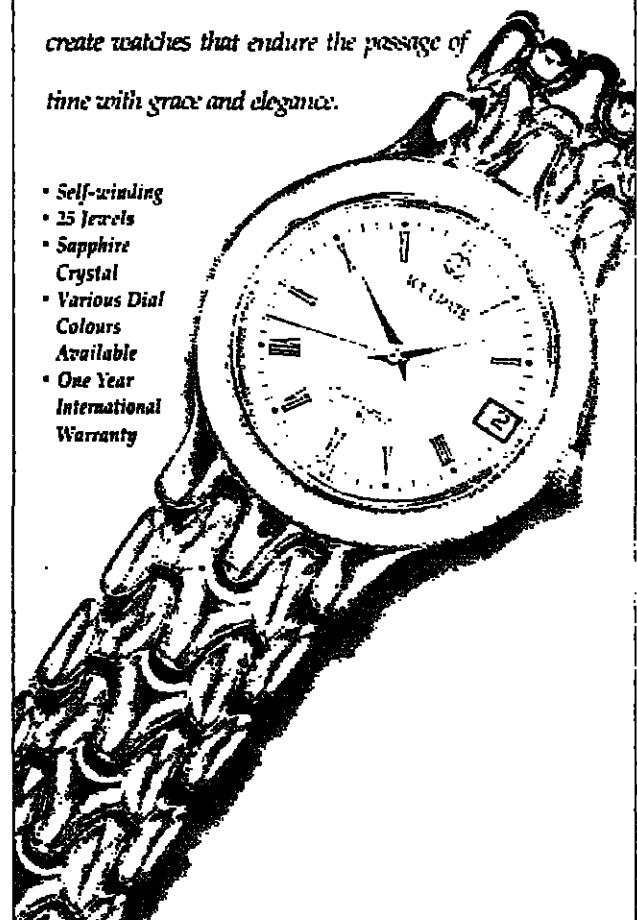
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Sinead cancels Jerusalem concert after death threats

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Irish singer Sinead O'Connor announced Monday that she was cancelling a pro-peace concert due to be held in Jerusalem this week because of death threats from suspected Jewish extremists.

The concert had been scheduled to be held Saturday as part of a week-long series of events organised by Israeli and Palestinian women's organisations who support Palestinian claims to Israeli-occupied Arab east Jerusalem.

"I cannot put in danger the lives of my two children, my musicians and my technicians, so I have decided to cancel this concert," Ms. O'Connor said in a message sent to Daphna Golan, one of the event's organisers.

"I still support whatever is needed to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict without violence," Ms. O'Connor said, adding that she would dedicate her next album to peace in the Middle East, Rwanda and Northern Ireland.

Ms. Golan told AFP that anonymous death threats against Ms. O'Connor had been received by the Irish and British embassies in Tel Aviv, apparently coming

from extreme right-wing Jewish groups.

"We truly regret this cancellation," said Ms. Golan, of the Israeli feminist group Bat Shalom, which together with its Palestinian counterpart, the Jerusalem Centre for Women, organised this week's events on the theme "sharing Jerusalem — two capitals for two states."

An Israeli militant, Itamar Ben Gvir of the far-right group Ideological Front, claimed credit for forcing Ms. O'Connor to cancel the concert, although he stopped short of saying the death threats came from his movement.

"It's largely thanks to our intervention that the concert was cancelled," Mr. Ben Gvir said on Israel army radio without elaborating.

The ideological front was formed after Israel outlawed the anti-Arab Kach movement in 1994.

Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert, a leading figure in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing Likud Party and a fierce opponent of Palestinian claims over east Jerusalem, welcomed the cancellation of the Ms. O'Connor concert.

However, he claimed the decision was taken because organisers had failed to sell

enough tickets rather than due to reported death threats.

In a statement, Mr. Olmert accused the organisers of trying "to fool the municipality by organising a political rally under the cover of a peace concert."

Ms. Golan denied Mr. Olmert's statement, saying 2,000 tickets had been sold for Ms. O'Connor's concert in the past three days. The event was to have been held at a small outdoor amphitheatre under the walls of Jerusalem's Old City.

Israel occupied east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war and unilaterally annexed it as part of its "eternal" capital.

Israel promised under the Oslo peace accords to negotiate the future of the eastern sector of the city with the Palestinians, who want to make east Jerusalem the capital of a future state.

But since coming to power a year ago, Mr. Netanyahu has said Israeli sovereignty over all Jerusalem is non-negotiable.

Mr. Netanyahu's decision in March to build a large new Jewish housing project in the east of the city plunged peace talks with the Palestinians into crisis.

Trial of Japanese Red Army members resumes in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP) — The trial of five members of the Japanese Red Army extremist group facing forgery charges resumed here Monday with testimony from witnesses for the prosecution.

The Beirut criminal court heard testimony from prosecution witnesses before adjourning until July 7, when the defence will present its case.

The four men and one woman arrested Feb. 15 are charged with falsifying documents, using false passports and illegally entering and residing in Lebanon — charges which carry jail sentences of up to seven years.

However, the five ageing Japanese have not been charged with any offences relating to their membership of the Japanese Red Army, which carried out a string of bloody terrorist attacks in Asia, Europe and

the Middle East in the 1970s.

Monday's brief session was devoted to testimony from prosecution witnesses — members of the State Security Agency which arrested the Japanese Red Army members and carried out preliminary interrogations.

On trial are Kozo Okamoto, 49, the sole survivor of a 1972 attack on Tel Aviv's Lod airport which left more than two dozen people dead, Kazuo Tohira, 44, Haro Wako, 48, Masao Adachi, 57, and the sole woman, Mariko Yamamoto, 57.

Security was tight at the Beirut courtroom for the second day of the trial which began on June 9 and photographers were banned from taking pictures of the defendants.

Japanese lawyer Osamu Kawamura has arrived from Tokyo to help defend the

five, who already have a defence team of some 100 attorneys rallied by Lebanese and Palestinian leftist groups, intellectuals, deputies and even government ministers.

Mr. Kawamura is accompanied by an interpreter, Tasuku Yamato, a member of an organisation for the rights of political prisoners.

Japan's ambassador to Lebanon has urged the government to agree to the extradition of the five and repeated the call in a magazine interview.

"We hope the (Lebanese) government will adopt the right position and hand the arrested people over to us," Ambassador Yasuji Ishigaki told the weekly magazine in Lebanon.

Japan and Lebanon are not linked by an extradition treaty, and it is up to the Lebanese cabinet to decide whether to hand over the five after the trial ends.

Cohen hails troop presence in Kuwait to counter Iran, Iraq

CAMP DOHA (AFP) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Cohen hailed U.S. troops in Kuwait Monday as a "premier example of power projection" and warned that Iran and Iraq still threatened the region.

Flanked by Paladin artillery pieces and M-1 Abrams tanks, Mr. Cohen said Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had not given up his goal of breaking U.N. sanctions and dividing the U.S.-led coalition against him.

"He's constantly probing any which way he can to find any weakness in our force levels, and the solidarity of our allies," Mr. Cohen told troops assembled here.

Enough U.S. tanks and fighting vehicles — some 3,300 in all — are stored here to outfit three combat battalions on short notice in the event of hostilities.

An average 2,700 U.S. troops are in the Gulf state at any given time, training in the desert a few miles from the Iraqi border.

An infantry battalion from Fort Hood, Texas, just finished deploying here for exercises designed to give the United States a continuous presence in Kuwait, which was overrun by Iraqi forces in 1990, triggering the Gulf war.

Mr. Cohen, who arrived in Kuwait Sunday on the second stop of a Gulf tour, met

with the defence minister and foreign minister Sunday evening and with the Emir before departing for Bahrain.

A senior defence official said the U.S. policy of dual containment of Iran and Iraq was at the top of the agenda here.

Mr. Cohen also was emphasising to the Kuwaitis the importance of using U.S. military equipment so that their two militaries could operate together better, a senior defence official said.

Kuwait is considering acquiring a Chinese field artillery system, but the United States is pushing for the Paladin, a U.S.-made system. British and South African artillery systems also are in competition.

"The reason it's important is because of the inter-operability issue — to fight the common fight," the official said.

In his speech to the troops, Mr. Cohen raised the concerns here over force protection, which have heightened with the approach of the anniversary of the June 25, 1996 terrorist bombing in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

"It's a high threat area," Mr. Cohen said. "You have to remain on alert at all times. There is something called Iraq that we're all concerned about."

Keep Lenin's body on display but not in Red Square — Kremlin

MOSCOW (AFP) — The Kremlin on Monday said Lenin's body could be kept on display as long as it is moved from Red Square, acknowledging that the founder of communism still enjoyed a "cult" following 73 years after his death.

The announcement by President Boris Yeltsin's legal advisor Mikhail Krasnov appeared to be a sop to communists and nationalists who have rejected proposals to bury Lenin's body.

Mr. Krasnov told Itar-Tass news agency that the mausoleum must be closed and Lenin's body moved from Red Square, "the heart of Russia," because he symbolises the past of one-party rule in a new multi-party Russia.

"However, we cannot stop taking into account those for whom Lenin's body represents a kind of cult and who would like to kneel before him," Mr. Krasnov said. "That's possible, but not on Red Square." "We must know what is on the minds of the specialists, priests, quite simply wise and intelligent people," he added.



PARLIAMENTARIANS STAND FOR A SHOT: Deputy Khalid Messaoudi talks with two deputies from the south of Algeria on Monday as the inaugural session of the new multi-party parliament was held following the June 5 elections. No one party dominates the national assembly (AFP photo)

Khatami may appoint woman as cabinet minister in historical act

TEHRAN (AP) — For the first time since the 1979 revolution brought the Islamic Republic to power, a woman will serve as a minister in a cabinet in Iran, a newspaper reported Monday.

The English-language Iran News said it had "confirmed reports" that a woman would be given the post of health minister after president-elect Mohammed Khatami succeeds his ally, President Hashemi Rafsanjani, in early August. Mr. Rafsanjani will step down after two, four-year terms, as required by law.

Two women legislators, Fatemeh Ramazanzadeh and Qodsiyeh Seyed Alavi, are the front-runners for the post, said the paper, which is close to the government and often has reliable inside information.

Both women are members of the 270-seat majlis, or parliament, and Ms. Ramazanzadeh is a gynecologist.

The appointment of a woman would mark a bold symbolic move by Mr. Khatami, a moderate cleric who won a landslide victory last month.

Before the election, he had hinted at his willingness to name a woman to his cabinet, telling the women's magazine Zanan that he saw "no obstacle to women becoming ministers in the government."

Unlike more conservative Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, where women are not even allowed to drive, women in Iran work and run businesses. Seventeen serve in the majlis, but so far the government has barred them from holding senior positions.

Mr. Khatami's overwhelming

win over Parliament Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri was seen as a protest vote against the hard-line clerical establishment, which backed Mr. Nateq Nouri.

Mr. Khatami is not expected to bring radical changes in Iran's Islamic government. But it is believed that he will try to moderate the strict Muslim code enforced by the hardliners, which bans satellite dishes and requires that women be veiled.

Women and young Iranians fed up with the strict rules were the force behind Mr. Khatami's election.

Erbakan's expected resignation a turning point in Turkey crisis

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's political crisis is headed for a turning point Wednesday when Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan is expected to resign so his conservative coalition partner Tansu Ciller can take over as premier and try to defuse tension with the army.

But a lack of parliamentary support threatens the planned handover, and even if Ms. Ciller does become premier, she will find it extremely difficult to mend ties with the pro-secular military, analysts said Monday.

"Mr. Erbakan will present his resignation to President Suleyman Demirel Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.," a senior aide to Ms. Ciller told reporters here Sunday.

"It is clear that this government can no longer provide solutions to the problems of Turkey," Mehmet Golhan said, admitting that the coalition government of Erbakan's pro-Islamist Welfare Party and Ms. Ciller's True Path Party "had caused an increase

of tension in society."

The handover move was widely seen as a way of avoiding the growing threat of a coup in Turkey, where the military views itself as the guardian of the country's strict secular traditions and has long been wary of the government's pro-Islamist slant.

But to obtain a crucial vote of confidence for Ms. Ciller's Prime Ministry, the ruling partners desperately need the support of the extreme-right Grand Union Party, which has a key eight-member group in the 550-seat parliament.

Grand Union, which has traditionally backed Mr. Erbakan's government in parliamentary votes, says it is still undecided on whether to support Ms. Ciller, and has already turned down an offer to take part in the new cabinet.

Moreover, when Mr. Erbakan resigns to pave the way for Ms. Ciller, the president has the constitutional right to appoint Mesut

Yilmaz, the conservative main opposition leader, as prime minister instead. Mr. Yilmaz's Motherland Party has a larger number of parliamentary seats than Ms. Ciller's True Path.

Another possibility is that continued defections by True Path deputies would further isolate Mr. Erbakan and Ms. Ciller. In the last three weeks, five Ciller deputies have resigned from the party and two cabinet ministers quit the government in protest at continued partnership with the Islamists.

A top Ms. Ciller aide, State Minister for Foreign Trade Ayfer Yilmaz, told reporters Monday that she may also refuse to take part in the new government.

One political analyst told AFP that the powerful army wanted both Mr. Erbakan and Ms. Ciller out of the government. Ms. Ciller, the analyst said, was equally disliked in the military ranks for bringing the Islamists to power by setting up an alliance with them

last year.

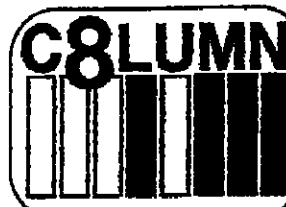
Mr. Erbakan's agreement to cede the prime ministry to Ms. Ciller came last week after the army openly accused his Welfare for the first time of attempting to incite its supporters against the secular regime.

A senior general told a rare briefing for journalists last Wednesday that "the army is decided to use all possible means to fight subversive religious movements," which the military sees as the biggest threat facing the republic.

General Fevzi Turkci, intelligence chief at the Turkish general staff, said "religious fundamentalism has flourished during this government's term."

Escalating political tensions have caused public fears of an approaching army coup although top military commanders have so far ruled out the possibility.

The Turkish army has staged three coups in the last 37 years on the grounds of protecting the state.



Israeli no-drugs party urns to acid fest

BET SHE'AN, Israel (AFP) — Only after a soldier dove into an empty swimming pool did Israeli police guarding an "anti-drugs" party begin to suspect participants were more than just high on life, the Maariv newspaper reported Sunday. The "drugless festival" was organised over the weekend by a non-profit anti-drug organisation in this northern town and was chaperoned by 200 adults and 30 local policemen, the newspaper said. But police suspect that hundreds of youngsters at the party used ecstasy, acid, LSD or marijuana, officers told the daily. Twenty-one persons were arrested for drug offences, including two soldiers, one of whom had tried to take a swim in the empty pool. "It's obvious what happened there," one participant told Maariv. "The way people moved and the glazed look in their eyes plus the widespread smoke showed that we're definitely talking about a drug party," he said. Israel has been waging a widespread anti-drug campaign this year following a marked upsurge in illegal drug use.

Drug abuse and indiscipline rife in British army

LONDON (AFP) — Drug abuse, indiscipline and violent crime are widespread in many units of the British army, a Sunday newspaper reported. The Sunday Times quoted figures released to it by the Ministry of Defence which showed convictions of soldiers and officers had risen by a record 36 per cent to 289, representing a faster increase than in any previous year. The total number of drugs convictions also rose by 80 per cent to 38 for 1995, the latest year for which figures were available, the weekly said. Regiments that have recently been affected include the life guards and the Scots guards, both of which took part with Queen Elizabeth II in Saturday's annual Trooping the Colour ceremony to mark the monarch's official birthday. The paper said that military commanders are increasingly concerned by discipline problems.

Clinton a 'spoiled brat' — Republican leader

WASHINGTON (R) — Senate Republican leader Trent Lott on Sunday accused President Bill Clinton of acting like a "spoiled brat" in a spat over tax cuts. "He acts like a spoiled brat. He thinks he's got to have his way or no way," Senator Trent Lott said on the ABC programme "this week." Lott and other Republicans have been wrangling with the White House over tax cut proposals in a deal to balance the Federal budget. President Clinton on Sunday declined to be drawn into a slanging match with the powerful Republican leader. "I wish him a happy father's day," the president told reporters after a holiday brunch with his wife and daughter at a local riverside restaurant.

More than 1,000 people have AIDS in Iran — minister

DUBAI (R) — More than 1,000 people in Iran suffer from AIDS and most of them contracted the disease through sexual contact, Iran's Health Minister Alireza Marandi said Monday. "The total number of people who have got AIDS in Iran stands at 1,047, with 70 to 80 per cent of them contracting the deadly disease through sexual contacts," Marandi said in comments carried by the official Iranian news agency IRNA. The minister, speaking at a one-day symposium on the disease, said the rest of the AIDS victims among Iran's 60 million people had been infected by contaminated blood.

